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Through Blood and Iron:

A STORY

OF THE

FRENCH-GERMAN WAR.

BY

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German unity can only be accomplished through blood and iron.
OTTO V. BISMARK.

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THROUGH BLOOD AND IRON.

CHAPTER I.

THE year of our Lord 1870 was ushered in like all the previous children of time: little thought of, less cared for. During its first months nobody dreamed of the importance it was to acquire in chronology; of the bloody dye with which it was to register its events in the annals of history. If anything, its aspect was of a drowsy nature, resulting perhaps from the continued attempt at Rome to draw the medieval night-cap over the face of a modern age. Its spring smiled as sweetly as ever upon Southern Germany, and on no portion of that fair land did the sun shine with greater brightness, than on the highly favored city of Munich. Beautiful Munich! Finest jewel in the crown of Bavaria! Thou art perhaps more properly called the Athens on the Isar, than thy more presuming sister on the sands of Brandenburg the "Athens on the Spree." Science is a household word in thy precints; art a pastime for thy children. Vast libraries crowd thy princely halls, and the genius of Germany's greatest sons has covered with paintings and statues the walls of buildings which either imitate the classic temples of Greece and Rome, or surpass them in boldness of conceptin and beauty of execution.

Yet with all thy art and learning thou hast managed to preserve a child-like simplicity which is equally preferable to the assuming conceit of Berlin, and the immorality and superficial gloss of Paris.

How hast thou succeeded in thus avoiding the reefs on which the domestic virtues of other metropolitan cities wrecked? Does the geniality of thy clime preserve in thy enclosures a touch of the golden age? Or art thou indebted for this enviable simpli-

city to that far-famed beverage which thy brewers know how to prepare, and thy land-lords to pour out to citizen and stranger in never-failing abundance?

This question is hard to decide; but he who has sat in the pleasant vaults and gardens of Munich, and quaffed away his cares in that golden flood which other towns and other nations have thus far vainly tried to imitate: such a one, I venture to say, would hardly underrate the influence which tne favorite beverage of Munich has exercised upon the disposition of her citizens.

Step with me into the basement of a fashionable restaurant. The weather has hardly become sufficiently settled, to entice the people into the open gardens, and the inhabitants of Munich therefore prefer the greater comfort and equal dispensations which establishments of the above character are apt to offer. We find the guests scattered around a number of small tables, busily engaged in discussing the topics of the day, and emptying the large glasses with a zeal which is only emulated by the exertions which the waiters make in replenishing the waning supply.

It is a lively spectacle, for every guest advocates his opinion with word and gesture; but he, who expects to behold such scenes, as are almost daily enacted in American saloons, is much mistaken. The raised voice, the energetic gesture never overstep the boundaries of propriety, and we finish our round through the spacious establishment without witnessing a single word or act which would bring a frown upon the brow of the most fastidious.

We notice more than one thoughful face on which the foaming beverage has failed to leave the slightest impression. This is especially the case with a couple of guests who sit in a far-off corner by themselves, deeply engaged in conversation, but yet sufficiently attentive to their surroundings to convince themselves, that their half-whispered words remain their sole possession. This caution and secrecy attracts our attention, and our gaze, once attracted, adheres to the interesting spectacle. The more we gaze at these men, the more we feel convinced that they furnish no common objects of observation. Both are well dressed, and betray by look and bearing the fact that they are members of the higher classes of society. They are apparently between fifty and sixty, and the black hair which protrudes from under

their felt hats, shows numerous streaks of gray. They bear a sufficient resemblance to warrant our belief that they are relatives, perhaps brothers. Their features are well formed, showing that square, massive cut which we so frequently notice amongst the Bavarians.

Their resemblance, however, merely extended to the features, not their expression. While the one, and evidently the elder, preserved an equanimity through which only a stealthy, lurking glance stole itself now and then, the other seemed rather nervous in his motions and generally coupled his words and gestures with a glance from his black eyes, so dark and foreboding, as to fasten upon him our suspicion of carrying his political and, maybe, religious opinions to zealotry and intolerance. Guessing, however, is at best a poor way of arriving at conclusions, and if we are really anxious to learn more about the two whisperers in the corner, let us step behind the heavy pillar in their neighborhood, and listen to their conversation.

"I fully agree with you, brother Ignatz," we hear the elder say with that unction of tone which the preacher so frequently carries from the pulpit into every-day life, "these are ominous times. Church and State are daily threatened and assailed by innovators, and the injurious leaven appears to spread constantly amongst the people."

"No Joseph! Let me hope that your anxiety for the good cause lets you see things in too gloomy a light. I never doubted that iniquity and treason prevailed in high circles, and that the counsellors of the king were sadly forgetful of their sacred trust; but the mass of the people, Joseph: let me hope, that *they* at least are sound to the core, and reject the dangerous doctrines of civil and religious liberty with which demagogues endeavor to catch their vote and their support."

The other shook his head.

"I wish I could leave you in your delusion; aye—more than that—I wish I could join in it. But the signs of the day are too plain to be mistaken. Do not the enemies of our national independence and our religious unity daily meet in council and allure thousands on to the path of ruin? Do they not openly advocate the renouncement of our national sovereignty and the annexation

to Prussia, the arch enemy of our country? Do they not openly counsel resistance to the highest decrees of our holy church, tho' passed by the sacred body of the bishops united? No, no, Ignatz; let them but gain the majority of the mob, and they will speedily pull down the venerable institutions, to build up and perpetuate which, so many great and sainted men have lived, labored and died."

"Perhaps you are right;" replied Ignatz after a short pause and with a melancholy accent. "Indeed, I am *sure* you are right, for thus far I have always had occasion to acknowledge your superior wisdom and penetration. But granting that you *are* right: is there no remedy for this dreadful evil? Are you like the physician, who can point out the disease, but is incapable of curing it?"

"No Ignatz, I am not like that physician," the other replied even more guardedly, sending forth at the same time that lurking glance which we noticed before. "I rejoice to say that I am not only in possession of an infallible remedy for this dangerous disease, but shall not fail to apply it, if I can be sure of the needful support within and without the folds of our holy church."

"Sure of it!" exclaimed Ignatz with a zeal, whose loudness the other thought proper to dampen by a timely warning. "You surely do not mean to intimate that we are tardy in upholding you, after so many proofs of our zeal?"

"No, Ignatz, that I do not," Joseph replied soothingly. "Our friends have done well enough; but you must not forget that this is no common danger which threatens us. Extraordinary cases require extraordinary treatment, and so you can hardly accuse me of severity, if I say that our past efforts are unequal to the emergency. The mine is laid; the mine destined to blow the enemies of our time-honored institutions into atoms; but before I can be sure of a united support unto death, I shall not venture to apply the match which, if falsely handled, may effect our own ruin. It was for the purpose of discussing this point with you, that I sought this interview, Ignatz."

"And it shall bear fruit, Joseph; it shall bear ample fruit. Not a day, not an hour shall I tarry in stirring up such friends of mine, as are likely to assist us in our noble enterprise. And more

than this will I do, Joseph: I will at once and forever renounce those who refuse to make this holy cause their own. I will——"

"Stop, brother Ignatz!" the other now interrupted the enunciation with something like a sarcastic smile upon his lips. "Do not, as the proverb has it, pour out the child with the bath. We shall be bold like lions, but also wise like serpents. You must not, by violence, drive those into the hostile camp who might still join our cause, provided a back-door were left open to them."

"Again I bow before your superior wisdom, Joseph; but, pray brother, delay no longer the information regarding the means which you expect to use, in order to accomplish your glorious purpose."

"Very well, my brother, listen then," Joseph resumed with another cautious glance. "You know well that I do not believe in enlightening the great mass of the people, because the condition of mankind is such, as to make this knowledge insufficient and, therefore, injurious. To give the *child* the knowledge of the *man*, *might* not only, but *surely would* endanger its happiness and even its life. Therefore, let the child remain in ignorance. The mass also is nothing but a child, and—this I fear at least—will always remain one. Would we therefore not act imprudently in enlightening the people on subjects which would prove injurious to them? Verily, this is my honest belief and the principal reason, why I am so much opposed to republican institutions. Now if I conscientiously believe that it would be injurious to the people to receive a light, whose only effect would be to dazzle them: would it not be doubly wrong and infinitely more detrimental to them to receive into their own hands a weapon whose edge they would be in constant danger of turning against themselves? No Ignatz; if yonr experience has not already taught you the truth of this: believe me, the time will come, when you will turn from the crowd in disgust, and confess yourself an adherent to the first and rudimental principle of my policy."

"Alas! Joseph, my experience has long ago forced me to the same conclusion. It pains me to admit this much; but your principle contains nothing which might forbid my co-operation. But proceed; you have not yet made your application of this doctrine."

"Why Ignatz, can you not draw the inference yourself? If we must keep the people out of knowledge and power, we must manage to give them the *proper guardians* to rule them in accordance with our long and well established views. Here then is the cause I want you to canvass well amongst the high and favored few, in order to gain as many to our views as possible."

"And further, Joseph?"

"Further? Well never mind, Ignatz. Leave the rest to me. You are anything but an intriguer, and yet to intrigue and to fight for influence at court constitutes the rest. I know you will thank me for saving you such work: will you not, brother?"

"You are always my good, considerate Joseph. It would indeed be repugnant to me to assist in any under-hand game. If this is a weakness, depend upon it that I shall make up for it by zeal in other matters. But it is getting late, and if I tarry longer, I'll miss my dinner. Will you be our guest, Joseph?"

"No, thank you, Ignatz. The Chapter meets to-day, and as we have to act on important business, I cannot venture to absent myself. 'God's service before friend's service,' you know."

"An axiom hard to refute. Farewell, then, Joseph."

"Farewell brother! But stop a moment, Ignatz. I intended to speak to you about a little domestic matter, but forgot it over more important affairs. Now, since I think of it, I may as well make a clean breast of it. It is delicate too, Ignatz, and if I were not sure of your great faith in my brotherly love, I would hardly summon courage for such a liberty."

"A long preamble, Joseph," said the other smiling. "If I did not know my brother, I should actually think him afraid of me."

"Perhaps I am Ignatz; but here it goes: It is embodied in a short little question: Brother Ignatz, do you take quite as much interest in your daughter Hildegard, as you might?"

"A queer question indeed!" exclaimed Ignatz, half astonished, half indignant. "I must confess I fail to comprehend you."

"Well, then, let me shape my words a little differently: Do you take sufficient interest in her doings?"

This question was evidently more offensive than the first one, and the look of anger which flashed from Ignatz' eye showed plainly that a less intimate friend might have drawn a quick re-

tort upon himself for this bold interference in domestic matters. The control, however, which Joseph evidently exercised over his brother was too perfect to yield even to so serious a provocation, and when Ignatz spoke, his voice showed nothing but surprise and, maybe, a touch of reproach.

"Take sufficient interest in her doings!" he repeated. "Why! I thought you knew me better than to ask such questions. Hildegard is my last and only child, and all the interest I take in life centers in her person."

"I know, brother, I know, and I am therefore doubly surprised to learn from outsiders that there are movements developing in your house which are in glaring contrast with your sentiments and professions."

"You speak in riddles, Joseph. Would it not be more brotherly to drop metaphors and speak plainly?"

"I intended no mystification, Ignatz; on the contrary, I thought the slightest hint sufficient to enlighten you as to my meaning. I allude to nothing but the frequent visits of that Prussian officer at your house and his apparent intimacy with your family. This intimacy is the topic of remarks all over the city, and Madam Rumor speaks of an engagement between Hildegard and the Captain as an established fact."

During these words the blood had gradually risen to the temples of Ignatz, so that he presented a very flushed and excited appearance. His breath went quickly and heavily, and his right hand grasped the ivory head of his cane, as if he meant to crush it to pieces.

"Madam Rumor must be mistaken, brother Joseph," he replied with that low and forced voice which sends its accents forth with considerable distinctness. "My daughter cannot possibly have thus far forgotten her own dignity and the well-known sentiments of her father, as to throw her affection away on a man belonging to that accursed race which is the hereditary enemy of Bavaria. Captain Haller represents his government as military instructor of our troops, and his official capacity admits him to our court circles: how much more then to my humble house? How ever much I hate his nation, I cannot disregard the usages of civilized

society and shut my door against him, as long as he conducts himself with propriety."

"But if the rumor should prove correct?"

"I cannot credit it."

"Why, brother, there are stranger freaks of girlish affection recorded."

"In such a case our connection would at once be severed, of course. But it cannot be, it cannot be!"

"You can easily investigate the matter now."

"I can and will, Joseph, depend upon it. Receive my thanks for a hint which may avert incalculable misery from my house. But now farewell; or are you going in the same direction? So much the better; let us start in company."

As the brothers walked through the hall, they were respectfully greeted by nearly all the guests assembled, a proof that they were well known to the citizens of Munich.

"Good day, Herr Justitzrath!"

"Good day, your Reverence!"

These exclamations met them on all sides, and they greeted and nodded in return, until they reached the entrance. For a while their ways ran together; but they walked side by side without uttering a word. The last subject of their conversation had evidently made them thoughtful. The counsellor at least hung his head and brooded over his unpleasant discovery, while his brother was altogether too considerate and prudent to trouble him with suggestions which he knew to be superfluous. If I have at all succeeded in portraying this worthy priest, the reader must be aware that, if honest belief in the principles he advocated formed the basis of his character, subtlety and cunning furnished the chief elements of the superstructure. He had instilled the necessary elements into his brother's mind, and now left the process of fermentation to time and human nature.

For a while, then, the two brothers walked silently side by side, and when after the expiration of a few minutes the divine stopped to turn into a side street, the counsellor returned his grip with a heartiness which proved that, however disagreable the imparted knowledge had been to him, it had in no wisc impaired the deep and somewhat reverential affection he felt for his brother.

CHAPTER II.

On parting from his brother the counsellor quickened his steps, until he stopped before a handsome edifice on whose oaken door a plate of German silver paraded in Gothic letters the name of "Ignatz Feller, Counsellor at His Majesty's Court of Appeals."

On ringing the bell he was admitted by the porter who saluted his master with a mien indicating both respect and affection.

"Where is my wife?" Feller asked rather abruptly.

"Mrs. Feller is in her sitting-room."

"And my daughter?"

"Miss Hildegard keeps her mother company."

The counsellor ascended a flight of stairs, and, opening a door at the landing, entered into a large comfortable room which combined the neatness and comfort peculiar to the sitting-room of a well-to-do German family. There was no carpet there; nor did the visitor see any of those gaudy trinkets, without which an English "parlor" or a French "salon" is considered imperfect. A few good pictures on the wall showed that the inmates were imbued with the love of art so common in Munich. The furniture was mahogany, and dated from a period, when comfort and durability were not as yet sacrificed for mere appearance. The floor was painted brown, with lighter stripes running crosswise and cutting it into squares. In one corner stood the massive stove of glazed tiles, resting on an iron base in which short blocks of wood produced an even and lasting heat. A large and tastefully dyed basket contained even then the necessary fuel, and a faint glimmer under the sheet iron door showed that the ladies had not thought the season sufficiently advanced to dispense entirely with the genial influence of fire. The long wall opposite the windows was occupied by an old-fashioned sofa which, together with a round table before it, spoke of pleasant family-reunions. The short side opposite the door displayed an elegant piano, while the front wall was lined with a "throne," i. e. a low platform about three feet wide running the whole length of the room and containing a fancy sewing-table and several arm-chairs

which, thus elevated a foot or so above the level of the floor, offered a splendid view upon the street below.

They were occupied by two ladies, an elder and a younger one, sitting vis-a-vis and working at some fancy-work with all the zeal for which the daughters of Germany are famous. To relieve the tediousness of the merely mechanical labor they kept up a lively conversation, allowing, moreover, their eyes to wander now and then to the street, in order to catch anything unusual which might be going on there.

We know already that they are mother and daughter; but if we had been ignorant of this fact, a strong resemblance would have betrayed it. The elder lady could possibly be fifty, but would have looked considerably younger, if some deep furrows around the eyes and lips had not broken the otherwise smooth surface of her face. She showed traces of remarkable beauty; in fact, her countenance was one of those whose beauty seems to be independent of age. It bore the unmistakable impress of genuine goodness animated by the ray of intelligence which beamed forth from the large brown eyes.

The younger lady opposite her intimated, how the elder had probably looked thirty years ago. She was uncommonly handsome, and bore that appearance of refinement which only thorough mental culture can bestow; but she was also free from those disgusting features with which modern fashions seems bound to disfigure the fair sex. There is a way of dressing in style, and yet guarding against absurd extremes of which but few ladies seem to be cognizant. Else, why should they abstain from pursuing the only course calculated to make them appear to advantage? There is a general fear amongst ladies to appear old-fashioned; but very few only seem to be conscious of the danger of being *over*-fashionable.

Miss Hildegard Feller—for thus the porter gave her name—was one of those ladies who charm more by absence of defects, than by striking qualities or remarkable beauty. She would not have come under the epithet of "brilliant," which is necessary to secure the success of a belle at Saratoga. Her beauty was a quiet one, by which I understand by no means a languid, sleepy beauty. For *that* her eyes had too much brightness and con-

sciousness of mental power. Her face was regular and of a type holding the middle between the brunette and the blonde. Her hair was auburn, her eye hazel; her teint rather clear for a brunette, though lacking that dazzling whiteness which is generally coupled with fair or reddish hair. Her cheeks showed the bloom of youth, her lips and teeth the impress of health.

The countenance of Hildegard Feller might well be compared to a fine landscape on a fair summer-morning, through whose hazy calmness the sun shines with a warmth indicative of latent power. That this power existed in her, nobody who had once looked deeply into her eyes, could well deny; but on common occasions this power came not into display. If Hildegard had been artful, one might have fancied that this reserve of hers was studied; for even the finest display loses in attraction in proportion to the frequency of exposure; but such was not the case. The even tenor of her mind probably prevented an effervescence which deep natures only show on being deeply stirred; while shallow minds, like shallow waters, are ruffled by the slightest breeze. Hildegard was always true to herself; every word, every motion was in accordance with her character, and her company possessed a double charm, because one could enjoy it without the fear that some sudden freak, some ill-timed humor would mar the smoothness of her temper.

As might be supposed, Hildegard had her body as much under her control as her mind. Every motion of hers was—not measured, but natural, woman-like and therefore graceful. In this she was aided by a faultless figure, sufficiently high to lend dignity to grace; but yet light and lithe enough to exclude every thought of stiffness and awkwardness.

If we add to this, that Hildegard was a good scholar and an excellent performer on the piano, and that, withal, she had not neglected to perfect herself in those matters appertaining to the duties of a good housekeeper, the reader will surely admit that her parents had every reason to congratulate themselves on the possession of such a daughter, and that her father might well pause, before he sacrificed her happiness to prejudices which instigation and education had nurtured, and age and affliction fastened on his mind.

But will his meditated step really affect her happiness? Has rumor correctly linked her name with that of the Prussian officer? We shall see.

When Mr. Feller stepped into the room, the ladies looked up and, on recognizing the new-comer, at once dropped both work and conversation.

"Ah! long looked for, come at last!" said Mrs. Feller rising from her seat. "Christina announced dinner ready an hour ago, and if my worthy lord and master is half as hungry as—— but what is the matter Ignatz? You look excited! Has anything gone wrong with you?"

"Not with *me*, wife;" Feller replied with a somewhat stern voice, "but if Madam Rumor has not lied, there may be something wrong with *you*, my ladies."

"With us, Ignatz!"

The great astonishment with which these words were uttered showed plainly, that the manner of Mr. Feller's speaking was unusual; that he was not what is generally styled a "house-tyrant," a class uncommonly numerous in Germany, if we are to credit the reports of strangers traveling in that country.

"If not with you, Elisa," Feller resumed in softer tones, "perhaps with somebody else. Does this young lady understand the import of my words?"

Hildegard had risen with her mother. She had at first marveled with her at her father's conduct; but when he addressed the second pointed question to her alone, a sudden comprehension of his meaning seemed to seize her. She placed her hand upon her heart, as if attacked by a sudden pain, and a deep red mantled her cheeks and spread to the very edge of her temples; but if Mr. Feller expected an answer, he was disappointed. Hildegard stood immovable, her eyes bent to the floor; but although her lips remained sealed, she was unmistakably the prey of a deep inward emotion.

Her silence brought a bitter smile to Mr. Feller's lips.

"Joseph was right after all," he said. "I would not believe him; but she has not a single word to defend herself. My last and only child rewards my care by bringing shame and sorrow upon my gray hair."

For a moment the frame of Hildegard quivered and she made a rapid motion, as if she meant to yield to a sudden impulse and repel the accusation by a hasty rejoinder; but regaining her self-control as rapidly as she had lost it, she continued her silence, merely bowing more lowly, as if determined to bear her father's judgment, unjust though it be. Mrs. Feller however showed more spirit and less patience.

"Ignatz!" she exclaimed somewhat indignantly. "What do you mean by thus heaping mysterious accusations upon your daughter? For heaven's sake! end this uncertainty and tell us what you mean!"

"*She* understands me well enough," said Feller, pointing to his daughter. "If she were so inclined, she might inform you that she has cast away the best feelings of her heart upon an enemy of her country. Yes, worse than this, she might inform you, that she carried her intimacy with that Prussian hireling so far, behind her parents' back, that it became a topic for street gossip."

This accusation seemed more than Hildegard was able to endure. She raised her head, looked full into her father's eyes and replied:

"Whoever told you so, father, is guilty of a falsehood. I am unconscious of any intercourse with Captain Haller of which I need blush before God or man."

"Captain Haller!" exclaimed Mrs. Feller. "Is it of him you speak?"

"A guilty conscience compelled her to betray the fatal secret. If there had been no undue intimacy between you and the Captain: why this voluntary confession on your part?"

"I would have been guilty of duplicity, if I had pretended not to understand you."

"Then you confess at least to an understanding with the Captain which you thought proper to conceal from your parents?"

For a moment girlish diffidence battled with her love of truth; but conquering this emotion she at last resumed:

"There is such an understanding; but it only dates from yesterday."

"And how could you forget yourself so far, as to enter into a compact with a man who numbers with the enemies of your

country? Were you not aware that your father would both loathe and reject such a union with all his might? Were you not aware that he would sooner see you the bride of death, than that of an accursed Prussian?"

Hildegard for a moment shrank before these expressions of a fierce hatred; but gathering courage in the consciousness of a good cause, she replied:

"The understanding with Captain Haller was no compact, father; nor was it intended to remain a secret. When the Captain told me in an open manly way that he had formed an affection for me, and begged for a return of his feeliugs and the gift of my hand, I told him that my hand was not at my disposal, and that he must address my parents for a realization of his wishes."

"And your affection, foolish child: did you tell him, that your affection was at his disposal?"

"I told him the truth, father. I told him that his conduct had from the first gained him my sincere regard, and that, in case of my parents' consent to our union, there was nothing in my feelings that would forbid the consummation of his hopes."

"And did you never, for a moment, consider the affliction which, by so doing, you would bring upon your parents, Hildegard?"

"I did not, father. I always heard you speak of Captain Haller in terms of regard; and as for mother, I know her to look upon him with both regard and affection."

"And so I do, Ignatz, to tell the truth of it. Captain Haller is a worthy young man, and I think your Christian principles ought to prevent you from carrying your hatred of his nation to such extremes!"

"There! I thought as much!" exclaimed Feller with renewed bitterness. "Mother and daughter leagued to defeat my authority! But you shall not succeed, I warrant you. Eliza! Hildegard! Have you forgotten that my first-born son, your son and brother, was killed by the comrades of this Prussian hireling?"

"On the field of battle: yes!" replied Mrs. Feller. "But how can you blame Haller for that affliction, Ignatz? Believe me, I mourn Albert's death as deeply as you; but I cannot br'ng myself to blame for it a man, who is as innocent of it, as you or I.

Captain Haller did not provoke this war; it was his government which commenced it, and, as some allege, with good cause. Haller was bound by both his oath and honor to follow the standard of his king, and I like him only the better for the bravery which he is said to have displayed on all occasions. But he did not even fight against our men, but served under Steinmetz in Bohemia. How then you can have the heart to blame him for Albert's death, I am incapable of comprehending."

"If I do not blame him personally, the death of my poor boy has at least filled me with such aversion—not to say hatred—against his race that I cannot bring myse'f to consider him in the light of a friend—much less that of a son-in-law. Cease arguing the case then, and abstain from ever soliciting my consent; for as truly as the sun is shining on yonder heavens, unless a miracle converts the feelings of my bosom into sheer love for the enemies of my country, this Prussian shall never enter my house as my son-in-law!"

"And so you are ready, to sacrifice the happiness of your daughter to the gratification of a groundless grudge?"

"Groundless indeed!" Feller cried with a bitter laugh. "These Prussians come and invade my country; they destroy my property and infringe upon the prerogatives of my monarch; to crown their work, they kill my hopeful son; and yet I am told that my grudge against them is groundless!"

"But beware, how you try my patience!" he resumed after a momentary pause, the remembrance of his wrongs having roused his ire to even a higher pitch. "I have lost one son on the battle field; another has rendered himself unworthy of the name of Feller by plunging into an abyss of vice and dissipation. He, too, is dead for me to all intents and purposes, and there is but one child left to cheer the loneliness of my old age. But before I surrender her to the arms of a Prussian soldier, I shall turn her from my door with a stone for her pillow and my curse for her inheritance. I am going to show this arrogant captain his proper place, and if you value your peace and mine, you will abstain from meddling with my arrangements."

With these words he left the room, slamming the door rather more heavily than necessary, and leaving the two ladies in a

strange state of stupefaction, grief and sadness. For a while they maintained the same position, which they had occupied during the whole painful scene; but at last, when a heavy sigh wrung itself from Hildegard's bosom and struck her mother's ear, the latter turned and, with an exclamation of endearment, drew her to her heart.

"Poor child!" she exclaimed, stroking her hair and striving to gain a look into her eyes. "Who would have dreamt of such a thing? Why did you not confide your secret to me to break it to your father? I might have averted this fearful storm which threatens to blast your young love, before it has fairly budded into life."

"Alas! mother, I had not the heart to tell you. I looked for him every minute to ask your consent, and I expected such great results from his eloquence that I was unwilling to spoil everything by my own poor efforts. Little did I dream that my expectations would so soon be disappointed."

"Poor child! And do you really love him so very much?"

"I hardly know, mother. I liked him from the first—how could I help it with his manly bearing and noble qualities?—but of late his company has indeed become very dear to me. When he told me how much he thought of me, I felt very happy, mother."

"Well, keep up your courage, Hildegard! We must not despair of a happy solution of this difficulty, in spite of your father's violent opposition. As to me, I set great store upon the Captain, and would with pleasure welcome him as my son. Be assured, that I shall use my whole influence with your father to set matters right."

Hildegard shook her head.

"I have no hopes whatever, mother," she said with a sad but resigned voice. "How could I, after listening to such fierce expressions of hatred? The very fact, that father is generally so kind and considerate, destroys my hope that he will ever change in this respect."

"And you say that so quietly, Hildegard? If I did not know you better, I would say that your feelings for Captain Haller cannot be very ardent."

"Well, mother, what good would raving do? Would it not

Demonstration on the Boulevard of Strasburgh in Paris, after the declaration of War.

have the effect of making you miserable and adding to my own affliction? I owe obedience to my father and like a dutiful daughter I shall fulfill my obligation. He has the control of my hand; I shall not dispute his right. My *heart* is my *own*. I have given it to Hermann Haller and would not recover it, if I could. It is my father's privilege to say that I shall never be Hermann's wedded wife ;it is *my* privilege to refuse the suit of everybody else, and to this privilege, mother, I shall cling with unswerving tenacity. If I cannot be the wife of Hermann Haller, I shall go single through this life. But listen, mother! That is his step! Oh! how my heart beats! Hold me mother! my eyes fail me!"

The alarmed mother received the trembling form of Hildegard in her arms, and half led, half carried her to the sofa. There the young lady recovered gradually, and smiled faintly to dispel her mother's fear.

"I am better, mother; I did not think I was so weak. I did not mean to, surely, and henceforth I shall struggle more bravely under this trial which Providence has seen proper to impose on me. But was I right in thinking he had come? He is with father now, listening to the death-knell of his hopes, as I listened to it a while ago. Mother, I must see him before he goes. I *must*, and, if needs be, in my father's presence. Mother will you grant me this small, this only favor?"

"I will, child," replied Mrs. Feller, her eyes shining through tears. "You shall see Captain Haller, and if your father ten times decree the contrary. But I presume, he would hardly begrudge you this privilege. He allows a last, sumptuous repast to the culprit he has sentenced in court: could he be less liberal to a daughter, whose love he has destroyed in the hour of birth? No child, let come what will: I shall give orders to Peter to show the Captain into this room."

With these words she departed, leaving her daughter in a condition, more easily imagined than described. The love which Hildegard had conceived for Captain Haller, was not the result of a day. She had known him for a whole year, and the regard which his numerous virtues had won from her at the beginning, had rapidly ripened into a warm affection. Of course, this love had timidly shrunk to the background of her heart, as long as

she thought it unrequited, and perhaps it might finally have died for want of nourishment, if the Captain had not declared his honorable intentions. But his passionate words had drawn her love from its hiding-place and caused it to penetrate her whole being. Like the tender plant which was long deprived of heat and light, but suddenly struck by the animating sunbeam, it had all at once expanded and developed into a vitality and intensity amazing to Hildegard herself. But not until her father's stern veto had even she been conscious of the full strength of the affection she bore the man of her choice. Loth as I am to lose myself in metaphors I cannot help comparing her suffering love to the sapling which, tossed about by the furious whirlwind, sinks its roots more deeply into the groundto resist the outward force. That such struggles however cannot be endured without bitter grief, we may well imagine. Hildegard had experienced trials before; for what human being can reach maturity without passing through them? She had wept over the body of a beloved brother whose life had been cut prematurely short by a bullet on the battle-field; she had cried over the loss of another whom a wild spirit of adventure and an utter disregard of his parents, wishes had severed from the home, if not the hearts of the family; but never before had she felt so completely wretched, so totally miserable, as during the half hour intervening between her mother's departure and the knocking at the door announcing the dreaded, and yet craved for, interview. We know that she had previously formed the resolution of respecting her father's decision; but this resolution had been purchased at a fearful expense. A total renunciation of earthly happiness had been the price. The future looked a perfect blank, and life, instead of being a pleasure as before, had turned into an irksome duty. Alas! is it the *privilege* or *misfortune* of youth to feel so keenly? Would it make our youths and maidens happier to know that time has a balm for every wound? Would the blunting of the edge with which affliction strikes them, compensate them for the less subtle appreciation of happiness which would follow as a natural consequence? I doubt it. Youth is the era of illusions. To take the veil from their eyes before the time, would be an evil service. The young philosopher of Sais sank under the attempt of lifting

the curtain from the face of Truth. Her stern aspect crushed the unprepared mind. No! Let our young people continue to gaze at the world through the crystal of enthusiastic ardor. The forest seems greener, the sky bluer, labor lighter, pleasure sweeter. The maiden sees a hero in her swain; the swain an angel in his maiden. If they suffer a little more than we of greater age, they pay after all but cheaply for the intensity with which they are capable of tasting pleasure. They may be blind; but it would surely be cruelty to cut their cataract and give them vision.

CHAPTER III.

In answer to Hildegard's summons the door was opened, and a young man in military dress stepped into the room. He was rather tall and well built, the tight uniform showing his symmetrical form to great advantage. His fair hair and blue eyes pointed clearly to the northern home from which he hailed; nor could the northern character of the remaining traits be well mistaken. His face was serious to sadness, a feature which his recent interview with Mr. Feller had probably deepened. His motions were discrete and measured, yet firm and decisive, and one could not well have invented a more perfect model of a soldier, than that presented by Captain Haller. If he lacked the dash of the Frenchman, he betrayed in a high degree that complete presence of mind, that moral courage, determined to conquer or to die which the history of this year has again and again proven to be the vital element of military success.

It is almost superfluous to state that Captain Haller combined the most perfect education with these physical and mental advantages; for to be a scholar and a gentleman and to hold an important command in the Prussian army, are synonyms. It was this latter feature which had weighed so heavily in his favor on his first acquaintance with Hildegard. Not that her earlier friends and companions had not counted amongst them many who were his equals in knowledge and accomplishments; it was rather his

greater earnestness, his constant consciousness of a high aim and noble purpose, in contrast with the greater gayety and thoughtlessness of the more southern sons of Bavaria that had first attracted her attention and finally won her affection. As he now stepped into the room, the consciousness of his worth, as well as the thought of the impending separation, became so keen, as to force tears into her eyes. Haller saw them; he also saw her attempt to rise and welcome him, and, forgetting all the irritation which the interview with her father had doubtless coupled with his sorrow, he hastened to her side to sooth and comfort her.

She suffered him to take her hand, and suppressing her emotions with a violent exertion, said with a faint smile on her lips:

"I know our fate, Captain; but let me hope, that my father in rejecting your petition, did not forget what he owes to himself and to you. It would deepen my regret, to learn....."

"Say nothing further, Hildegard, *dear* Hildegard—for to call you so no earthly power shall hinder me. I know what you allude to, and it shows your generosity to forget your own trouble over my supposed wrong. However, there is no cause of fear. Your father has decidedly, not to say *sternly*, rejected my supplication; but he has at least vouchsafed to me the treatment, which one gentleman owes to another."

"Thank God for that at least!"

"I cannot join in your prayer, Hildegard. After denying me a boon in which my future happiness is bound up, it would have mattered little, if he had added insult to cruelty."

"And did he—did he give his reasons for this rejection?"

"He said enough to make me understand that I am to suffer for the real or fancied injuries which my government has inflicted on him and his country. I endeavored to plead my cause; but he stopped my attempt with snch decision that I desisted, renouncing all hope of changing his resolution."

"You judged him rightly, Sir. *I* too have dismissed all hopes of seeing our future assume a more favorable shape."

"And that is all you have to say, Hildegard? When I was summoned to appear here, I hoped that the daughter would repair the injustice of the father."

"How *can* I, Captain Haller? You would not counsel disobedience to my father?"

"I hardly know, what I *would* do, Hildegard. Only this much I know and feel with painful clearness: if your father relent not from his cruel obstinacy, my prospects for future happiness are gloomy indeed."

"Can it comfort you to know that in affliction at least we shall be mates? I do not know, whether I act prudently in speaking thus; but I feel, as if I ought to soften the untimely rigor of my father's action."

"And I appreciate your kindness, Hildegard, and thank you warmly for casting a ray of light on the gloom and desolation with which the future stares into my face. If anything can comfort me, it is the assurance that, tho' your father's veto drive me from your presence, I take with me the unchanging affection of your heart. Am I justified in construing your words thus favorably?"

"Why shonld I deny it, Sir? The love which I confessed to you yesterday, cannot all at once have become a grievous wrong. It is yours, as it was yesterday, and will be yours to-morrow, as it is to-day. If I am wrong in this confession, I can give no excuse, but that I follow the dictates of the same power which planted this affection in my heart."

"Hildegard, do not excuse yourself for smiling upon a convict who has had the staff broken over his head. Your sweet confession shows in a brighter light the jewel, I am to lose; but it arms me at the same time with fortitude to bear more bravely a destiny well nigh unbearable."

"And yet I do not know, whether all this is not very wrong. I begged your presence to smooth away the bad impression which my father's sternness has no doubt produced, and—to bid you a last farewell. Still, I was far from wishing to bind you hopelessly to the destiny of an unhappy girl. True, I for my part shall not cease to think of you, as long as life lasts; but then, what does it matter? My religion allows me to retreat into some convent and pray for you. With *you* the case is different. You fill a sphere of usefulness; you have duties to your family and to your country. It would be a great pity, if a wasted passion

should unfit you for the brilliant career that lies before you, and I would never forgive myself, if my thoughtless words should have the tendency of producing such results."

Haller shook his head.

"I have suffered you to finish, Hildegard," he said; "because I reverence every word that leaves your lips; but if you judge from this that I acquiesce in so unfair a compact, you are mistaken. You pledge to me your unswerving love and fidelity, and I should be at liberty to forsake you at any moment and sacrifice your precious memory to reasons of policy? No, Hildegard, I object decidedly to such an arrangement. I do not want to be surpassed in generosity by the lady of my love. Receive therefore my vow...."

"Hermann, forbear! Sweet as your words sound to my partial ear, how can I suffer you to leave me with such a pledge impeding all your actions?"

"Hildegard, listen to me!" he said gravely. "When you told me before that you loved me and would continue to love me to your dying hour, I did not doubt your word, because I know you. You are not fickle and giddy, like other ladies, and this unswerving steadiness, this even tenor were the main attractions which drew me to your feet. Now do you expect me to lack the very qualities which I admire so much in you? No, Hildegard, I too am slow to form affections; but what I love once, I love forever. Never shall I feel for other maiden what I feel for you: why then should you deny me the sweet consolation that, in spite of your father's veto, our hearts will continue to beat in unison? Hildegard, *dear* Hildegard, allow me the comfort to part from you as one with whom I shall sooner or later be reunited; as one whom I may truly call my own, tho' severed by distance, prejudice and hatred."

Again he seized her hand and looked into her face with a pleading earnestness difficult to resist. Alas! Hildegard was but too well inclined to listen to such tempting conjurations. If, in parting, they pledged their troth to one another, their separation would lose its bitterest sting, and rather increase, than lessen, their affection, since Hope, with unconquerable vitality, would hold out the prospect of a reunion in the distant future.

Haller saw that she wavered, and, like a good soldier, he pushed his attack, until she surrendered at discretion. Need we wonder that a fervent embrace sealed a compact closed in the face of such serious obstacles? Ah! she rested so securely in his strong arms that she could hardly realize the rapid flight of time and shrank back in surprise and alarm, when a gentle tap at the door reminded them of the necessity of a final parting.

"Hildegard! Farewell!"

"Yours for ever, Hermann!"

A parting kiss and the door closed upon a form which it might be her fate never to see again. She returned to the sofa, and, sinking into its cushions, delivered herself to a train of thoughts in which the elements of woe and bliss were strangely mixed. But unwilling to pry more deeply into the mysterious secrets of a virgin soul, we leave Hildegard and accompany Haller who descended the stairs in no enviable mood. True, he took with him the assurance of a love which to him was the embodiment of felicity; but on the other hand he could hardly conceal from himself the fact that the chances of ever approaching Hildegard again, much more possessing her, were slim indeed. His feelings therefore were a mixture of sweet and bitter in which the wormwood by far predominated. To meet his comrades in such a mood, and listen to their light and gay remarks, was intolerable; to seek the solitude of his lodgings on the other hand, was not prospective of any more desirable results. So Haller chose the expedient of loitering through the more quiet streets and boulevards of the city. These places breathed that tranquil serenity which characterizes the inhabitants of Munich, and promised to exercise a soothing influence upon the agitated mind of our friend. He wandered up and down the shady avenues ,taking as little notice of the flying moments as of his surroundings, until suddenly a familiar voice star tledhim from his reveries. Looking up he recognized one of the attaches of the Prussian embassy, with whom he was on rather friendly terms.

"What is the matter Sir Captain?" the new-comer said with a laughing voice, slipping his arm into that of Haller. "I have watched your movements for the last five minutes, but have failed to discover what you are about. You walk up and down, look-

ing neither right nor left, and cut a face, as if the whole world depended on the result of your deliberations. May a person inquire the subject of your study?"

"No, he may not," replied the Captain with a forced laugh. "I fear, my brown studies would neither entertain nor instruct you. Let me rather ask what takes you so early from the embassy?"

"*Early*, my friend?" the other asked wonderingly. "What time do you think it is? Don't you see that the sun is ready to retire? I am on my way to our hotel, and if you expect to get your supper, you had better keep me company; for we fellows develop a monstrous appetite you know."

"I really don't feel like eating."

"Ah! lari-fari! You say that with a mien, as if you meant to play Werther to-night. If you'll go with me, I shall tell you some spicy news en passant."

"Well, let us hear then. I surrender at discretion."

"But perhaps my news are news no longer. In fact they were in this afternoon's issue."

"I have not seen a paper all day."

"Then 'tis all right. A dispatch from Paris says that the Spanish Ministry offered the nomination for the throne to Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern."

"Well, what of it?"

"What of it? You take it decidedly cool. I said they offered the nomination for the crown to a prince of our royal family."

"That concerns Prince Leopold; but I fail to see how it will affect *us*."

"It may, my good friend, it may. The papers look at this as an intrigue of Bismark and Prim, gotten up for the purpose of reducing the influence of France."

"Well, the world would be none the worse for such a reduction."

"So say *you*; but the French Government thinks differently, if we are to judge from the dispatches which fly fast and thick between Paris and Berlin."

"Oh! it is quite natural that the French Government should seize upon such an opportunity to fire some of its favorite puff-guns. So they used their heavy calibre, did they?"

"Yes indeed! They insist upon King William's forbidding Leopold to accept the nomination."

"And the king?"

"Replies, that he gave no order to accept, and can consequently give no order to refuse."

"Good! They may chew away at that tough morsel. By the time it is digested, the whole affair will have blown over."

"So you expect no serious complications?"

"I do not. It strikes me, Napoleon has too much to do at home just now to desire a foreign complication."

"Might he not wish for such a one to get rid of his troubles at home?"

"Possibly, but not likely. A war with Germany would be his ruin. He'll count the cost, before he takes such a risky step, depend upon it."

"Perhaps he counts upon the neutrality or even assistance of our southern friends here."

"If so, he has made the bill without the host. I think better of the Southern Germans, than to believe them capable of treason."

"Treason is an ugly word. The seceders here would call it patriotism."

"The ultra-mountains or seceders, as you call them, are not the nation. Let any one propose such a measure to the people, and they'll string him up, as sure as you live. I for one, would not like to run the risk at any rate."

"It might be hazardous. But here is the hotel. Let us enter and embrace for the present your view of the question. A troubled mind affects the appetite. Permit me to toast you this glass with the motto: May it soon blow over!"

CHAPTER IV.

But it did not blow over! True, impartial minds saw no cause for war and considered the generous withdrawal of Prince Leopold a sure guarantee of peace. But peace did not suit the men who ruled over France; in truth it did not suit the nation either.

They had always been taught to regard themselves *the great nation par excellence*, and military glory their special inheritance. The Prussian successes of 1866 had made them nervous; they had always considered the victory of Sadowa an encroachment on their province. No nation but theirs had a right to defeat an adversary so thoroughly; none but theirs the privilege of shaping the destiny of Europe. It was presumptuous in these northern barbarians to raise their heads the way they did! They must be taught their places, if need be, by means of lead and powder. Indeed, the attempt would have been made before, if the needle-gun had not unfortunately assumed the shape of an ominous interrogation-mark and asked the question: Can you do it? The introduction of the chassepot was the answer. If they could not do it before, they thought themselves able to do it *now*. They burned to try it at all events, and therefore welcomed the shallowest pretence, provided it answered the purpose. They demanded that Prince Leopold should decline the nomination, and the prince, unwilling to furnish them a subterfuge, withdrew from the portentious arena. The world was satisfied and the moderate portion of the French press accepted the situation. "The Hohenzollern will not rule in Spain," said the *Constitutionnel*. "It is all we asked and with pride we receive this peaceful solution of the question." But the *Constitutionnel* was not inspired. It was not the intention of the French Government to be reconciled. They bent the bow with the determination of breaking it. "*Brusquez le roi! Snub the king!*" was Napoleon's order to Benedetti; an order which history will record as an instance of unexampled insolence in diplomatic intercourse. Still it answered the purpose, for it inaugurated the war. The old king showed himself equal to the emergency; he turned his back upon French insolence, and when he entered his capital, he received an ovation unparalelled in history; an ovation which sent its echoes to the remotest borders of Germany. All parts of the Fatherland rivalled in their expressions of patriotism, and if Napoleon had really counted on the actual, or at least moral, support of Southern Germany, his calculations showed the first one of the many fatal errors, which, in the course of a few months, reduced him

from a mighty sovereign to an object of pity abroad and of execration at home.

Bavaria was foremost in the ranks of the German tribes who raised their voice and cast in their weight for the support of the national cause. The particularistic elements which had prevailed only a few short weeks ago, disappeared from sight, and the most fiery patriotism shone forth in its full strength and splendor. A few croakers at first tried to stem the tide; but the cry: "*To the gallows with them!*" soon hushed their voices, and drove them to their obscure lurking-places. The young king, open to noble impulses, yielded to the pressure of his people, and telegraphed to Berlin: You may rely on Bavaria to the last drop of her children's blood. His popularity rose in accordance, and youth and age pressed around him to lay down upon the altar of the nation—the former its arms, the latter its gold. The great problem of the nation, so warmly longed for, so vainly aimed at; the dream of patriots and poets through centuries of shame and hnmiliation: *German Unity* had all at once become an accomplished fact. What the most zealous efforts of German statesmen had failed to produce, the taunting challenge of an over-bearing neighbor had brought about, as if through magic, and German unity stood there, like a gigantic statue cast in solid iron, frowning angrily upon the gathering hosts of Gaul.

Those who visited South-Germany during the weeks of July, would certainly not have recognized the Southern Germany of 1866. Instead of the former gloom and consternation, they witnessed enthusiasm and confidence of victory. Instead of the former hesitation, envy and dissention, they now saw the greatest harmony, promptness and decision. On the fourth of July the news of Leopold's nomination had first flashed over the wires, and on the 16th, the 17th and 18th, the ministries of Bavaria, Baden and Wurtemberg, had already issued their decrees to mobilize the army. Nor did these decrees remain dead letters! So rapidly were the troops drawn together and forwarded to the frontier that, when Frederic William, the Crown-Prince of Prussia and Commander of the southern contingent, arrived at Munich on the 27th, his royal host could with pride and satisfaction point to the splendid army standing ready in the Palatinate, waiting

eagerly for their royal leader and panting with impatience to be led against the common enemy.

And such a reception as was given to the royal guest at every station! the enthusiasm of the masses growing with every new step towards the capital. Were these really the same people who, a few months ago, cursed the very name of Prussia? Their guest was one of the principal agents who, in 1866, turned the scale of victory in favor of the Prussians, and yet they receive him to-day like the harbinger of a new Gospel, the deliverer from a long and galling thraldom.

The 27th of July 1870 will be remembered in Munich, as long as one stone stands upon another. The morning set in auspiciously and the sun shone brightly upon the gay display of the thousands of flags which had been hoisted in honor of the expected guest. They waved from all the steeples, from the city-hall and the Charles-gate, through which he was to enter. In front of the depot two gigantic poles bore in happy unison the banners of the North-German Bund and Bavaria, a new, but highly propitious spectacle.

The depot was literally covered with green. Wreaths, garlands and festoons crept through each other in endless variations, and, with the evergreens and orange-trees in tubs, lent the place a truly fantastic appearance. A brilliant assembly had gathered to welcome the royal guest. All the princes of the house of Wittelsbach, (the reigning family,) the Secretaries of State, the chiefs of staff, the entire councils of the city, stood in waiting to offer Frederic William the hospitality of the city.

A company of infantry and a squadron of cuirassiers with banners and music were posted as the guard of honor.

At last the shrill whistle of the locomotive announced the arrival of the train and sent a thrill through the waiting masses. A few minutes later a carriage with six made its appearance before the portals of the depot, escorted by the shining cuirassiers and occupied by the Crown-prince in the uniform of a Prussian general, the King of Bavaria and Prince Otto in the uniform of the Chevaux-legers. At this sight a never-ending shout rose from the inspired crowd and accompanied the princes to the royal palace. The handsome countenance and affable bearing of Fred-

eric William won every heart, and the multitude was sorry to see him disappear behind the portals of the palace, where he sought the much-needed rest.

In the evening, "Wallenstein's Camp" was to be performed at the Royal Opera House; but appropriate as this piece of Schiller seemed for the occasion, it was not the merits of the play which drew Munich's citizens into the house that night and filled every seat, yes even the aisles and corridors of the immense building to over-flowing. It was understood that the cherished guest was to appear in the royal box, and the eyes of the audience were not, as usual, centred on the curtain, but where the distinguished company was momentarily expected. When at length the doors of the box opened, a murmur ran through the assembly like the rustling of the wind in the leaves of the forest; and when King Ludwig led forward his guest and presented him to the audience —retiring himself modestly to the background—the house broke forth into such thundering applause that the strong building shook to its base. The orchestra joined in the ovation with a soul-stirring flourish, and shouts and flourishes blended and swelled in never-ending reverberations to the dome above. In vain the Crown prince bows repeatedly in acknowledgement of the enthusiastic reception. When he retires, the renewed clamor compels him to appear a second time at the hand of Ludwig. Such homage is not the result of mere ceremony; it is the effluence of the newly-aroused national spirit. Noble and worthy as the honored guest may be, this tribute is not so much offered to the individual, the prospective ruler of a powerful nation, as to the national standard-bearer, the center around which a people intoxicated with enthusiasm, can rally.

Gradually the tumult abates; but even the magic sounds of Beethoven's overture to Egmont are incapable of withdrawing the eyes of the audience from the royal box, until suddenly the music ceases, the curtain rises and an actor chains the attention by a prologue composed for the occasion. With masterly art, but a deeply moved voice, he alludes to the dreadful woe, which this unprovoked war is sure to bring over the country; but he also admonishes his hearers to seek consolation in the new-born unity of the Fatherland. "A royal word" he says, "penetrated the

masses; it flashed northward and dispelled before its brightness every doubt and uncertainty. 'Let come what may!' our king exclaimed; 'I shall keep faith with my confederate.' The country is united now: who can conquer it? Before the trumpet sounds the charge on the Rhine, we have already won the greatest victory over ourselves. The old confederation is renewed, and a royal pair—the Prussian Eagle and the Bavarian Lion—leads our hosts into the fight. This lofty constellation will light our armies through the night of conflict, and lead it irresistibly to another great battle of deliverance. Hail! thrice hail to the noble princes who forgot the past over their duty, and gave an example of ancient German faith!"

The audience had followed the address with breathless suspense; but when the orator called upon them to join him in a treble cheer, the crowd rose like a man and gave it with a thoroughness, before which even the former manifestations sank into insignificance. Strong men wept like children; bitter enemies rushed into each other's arms, and sober dignitaries tottered about, as if under the influence of sweet wine.

And what has meanwhile become of the persons for whom I tried to win the goodwill of the reader in the opening chapters? We lost sight of them in the grand upheaving of the nation; but for this oversight we may well be pardoned. Will you blame the man who views from the rocky coast the furious tumult of the stormy ocean, and loses sight of the paltry cork he was expected to watch? I would not speak disparagingly of the persons whose fate I mean to portray in this volume; but the worthiest man, the fairest damsel sink into insignificance, when at rare intervals nations get into commotion and rise to such majestic grandeur, that the same brush cannot possibly paint their colossal doings, and the feeble, tho' noble efforts of the individual. Not that I consider myself competent to grapple successfully with such a gigantic problem; on the contrary, I am fully sensible of my inability to do it justice, and hasten therefore to leave the dangerous field and resume the more modest task of tracing the development of individual life. Those who are inclined to find fault with the above aberration, are hardly capable of feeling the intoxication which seized a member of the great German family, even after an

expatriation of nearly twenty years, when the telegraph announced the glorious resurrection of the *Fatherland*. If I have failed to do their mighty uprising justice, I have had at least the satisfactiou of shouting with the shouters, and of revelling with the revellers. Henceforth, dear reader, I shall endeavor to keep sober; but if a ray of the enthusiasm which animates my brethren across the ocean, should color the following pages with a hue too glaring in your estimation, excuse a partiality for whose absence you would surely blame yourselves if in my place.

The great excitement with which the weeks following the separation of Haller and Hildegard were fraught, had been beneficial to both and in a measure deadened the grief to which otherwise they would have fallen a prey. The Captain had been engaged not only by the deep interest with which he followed the development of events; but also by the numerous duties which taxed his mental as well as his physical qualities. At first Prussia had looked upon Bavaria with pardonable suspicion. On former occasions the latter had frequently cast her lot with the national enemy, and the enthusiasm with which she this time embraced the common cause, was therefore as surprising as agreable. When at length every doubt was removed and the work of mobilizing went bravely on, the services of Captain Haller and his fellow officers became highly important to their government. They had been with the Bavarian troops for quite a length of time; they knew their *morale*, their strong and weak points, and through no other agency could the work of preparation be so effectually pushed on.

That under these circumstances Captain Haller had rather busy times, we may well imagine. He had to be up early and late and with the mustering and equipping, the equipping and dispatching of troops; with the frequent visits at the Prussian embassy and the Bavarian war-office, Haller found but little time to deliver himself to grief and despondency. If he thought of Hildegard, he kept her memory well enclosed in his bosom, never suffering her name to pass his lips. Now and then his duty would lead him past her home, and on such occasions he was sometimes fortunate enough to catch a glimpse of features which, in his estimation, embodied all the beauty on earth.

And Hildegard? She too had been powerfully moved by the signs of the times. During her childhood she had undoubtedly listened to many a lecture of both her father and uncle on the duties of a loyal Bavarian; but her mind was not such as to be easily influenced by mere preaching or example. True, before her acquaintance with Captain Haller she had in a measure shared the feelings of animosity, which nearly every Bavarian bore the Prussians after the struggle of 1866. She too had suffered its evil consequences in the death of a beloved brother; but, in spite of this, her mind was too calm, her judgment too clear, to allow this animosity to assume the character of fanatical hatred. She had several times indulged thoughts of her own concerning the condition of Germany, and now, when Captain Haller ventured upon this risky field and in their interviews argued German policy from a higher stand-point than her advisers had ever before occupied, it fell from her eyes like scales, and her mind rose to that elevation on which it became capable of appreciatin gthe great national resurrection.

The rest of the family was split into two different factions. While Mrs. Feller sided with Hildegard, as far as the moderation of greater age would permit, Mr. Feller and Joseph, who had lately become a very zealous visitor, formed the opposition. This word however hardly conveys the true idea, since the ladies studiously avoided a controversy on this delicate question. On it, the love of Hildegard had lately wrecked, and she knew her father too well to meet him on a field, where stubbornness and hatred prevented him from viewing the question in its true light, Mrs. Feller understood her daughter and adopted her tactics with a previous express agreement. So, if the brothers were dissatisfied with the conduct of the ladies, they could at most reproach them with indifference, not opposition. This indifference however moved Joseph to quite an immoderate wrath. He was altogether the most inveterate enemy of the patriotic movement, and what drew forth the mere displeasure of the councillor, was sure to receive the anathema of the divine. He constantly counselled open resistance to the measures of the national party and ventured even to express these sentiments to one of the crowds which the excitement of the times collected daily at a dozen dif-

Scenes before the Royal Palace after the reception of the declaration of War.

ferent places. The crowd, however, had thought proper to adopt a policy much less tolerant than that pursued by his niece, and made an onset on his Reverence, with such a total disregard for his clothes as well as his clerical dignity, that he had reached his brother's house in a very undignified condition. Since that moment his remonstrances had become less noisy, but much more bitter, and he treated his friends to his tirades to such an extent, that even Ignatz became occasionally impatient at his impractical suggestions, and merely avoided a controversy with his brother by adopting his daughter's policy of silence.

But how did the great events of the day affect himself? Was he totally callous to the call upon everything that is high, good and noble in human nature? For his own and our credit, we hope not. The priest may be more readily pardoned. He has renounced the world and devoted himself exclusively to the aggrandisement of his church. If he meddles with the world at all, it is with the view of furthering the church; if he judges the interest of his church and that of the old regime inseparably connected, we may excuse him for a policy which is in harmony with his views. The councilor, however, has married. He is a husband, a father, a judge, an active member of the community which in its largest sense represents the Fatherland. If he fails to comprehend this word; if he fails to respond to the call which summons the citizens to its support, he has a narrow mind, a callous heart which subject him justly to our severest criticism. But let us not judge too quickly. If as yet he refuses to listen to the voice of honor and duty, we need not imagine that he is totally deaf to their call. Habit and opinions always resist innovations, no matter how good. Mr. Feller may still profess his old sentiments, long after he has inwardly acknowledged their incorrectness. He may even do this without subjecting himself to the charge of open falsehood; for we often manage to blind ourselves against our own convictions, especially when they are at variance with our inclinations.

Altogether the household was out of tune, which is no wonder when we consider that two discords had recently jarred its harmony. Hildegard had evidently lost her spirits. She did not lament or complain; but this silent accusation was perhaps more

aggravating to Feller's uneasy conscience, than the loudest lamentations would have been. It made him nervous, because he found it difficult to maintain a position which was not assailed. This consciousness made him morose, and if we add to this dilemma the uncomfortable relation to his brother, his king and his country, we need not wonder that during the above period he came nearer to the description of a domestic tyrant than ever before. Of this too he was aware, and very frequently he was angry with himself for being angry with others. Thus it is always. "That is the curse of evil deeds," Gœthe says in his Faust; "that, self-creative, they beget the evil."

One morning, as he was sitting at his desk, apparently examining some documents which had been subjected to his decision, but in reality pondering over the unhappy turn which his affairs and in his opinion at least, the affairs of his country had taken, a servant entered and handed him a letter. Feller recognized the handwriting of Bray, the Secretary of State, and wondered what that dignitary could have to say to him. His astonishmcnt increased, when the note informed him that His Majesty would like to have the pleasure of seeing the councilor privately at his room at 11 o'clock A. M.

What could it mean? What did the king want of him? The name of the minister warranted the belief that the interview would not be a purely private one. Matters of State would probably be touched upon, and the councilor anticipated in his mind the momentous moment, when he would be called up publicly to define his position in the impending struggle. Public opinion is a fearful task-master. It takes greater courage to withstand its verdict than to storm a battery. Public opinion was decidedly on the side of the king, and could he possibly reconcile it with his principles.....

He was still brooding over the solution of this question, when, at the appointed time, the chamberlain threw open the door of the royal cabinet, and admitted him into the presence of the king.

Ludwig was not alone. He sat with his minister at a round table which was densely covered with letters, maps and all kinds of documents. When the councilor's name was announced, the

king looked up and on recognizing the new-comer, arose to meet him. Never before had he been so affable. He offered the councilor his hand, and greeted him with a pleasant smile and a warm "good morning."

Feller answered with a low bow.

"Your Majesty has ordered my presence...." he began. Inwardly he said to himself: "he surely wants to catch me." He forgot, however, that the king was that way to everybody else. A nimbus of gentleness, of genuine urbanity seemed to have surrounded him ever since his memorable resolution to adhere to the cause of Germany.

"Not ordered, Sir Councilor," he said, smilingly. "I merely *requested* your presence, because I would ask you a *favor*. Nor do I wish you to consider this request obligatory, although I do not hesitate to confess that a compliance would greatly please me."

"Your Majesty overwhelms me with kindness," he stammered. "May I ask the nature of the service I am able to render your Majesty?"

"Of course, Sir Councilor. Bray and I have received letters from the Palatinate, stating that things are in great confusion there, on account of the concentration of so many armies. Now I have always admired your administrative talents, and have no doubt that you would soon create order out of the chaos. What do you think of this? Will you help us in this emergency, and assist us in governing our fair province on the Rhine?"

"I govern the Palatinate!" exclaimed Feller with so much undisguised astonishment that it brought a smile to the face of the king. "I am afraid that your Majesty overrates my ability for such an important place."

"Trust me for that, Sir Councilor. The question is: are you willing to grant our request, and help us with your knowledge and experience in this hour of trial?"

"But the responsibility? Supposing I fail to secure your Majesty's approbation?",

"Trust me for that, I say. Bray and I have not selected you at random. We know you to be able; but we would not send you against your will. An unwilling servant is *no* servant at all. In

this great crisis of our country there must be no hesitation, no half measure. Either *for us*! or *against us*! must be the motto of all we come in contact with. Say, are you ready to adopt the *former*?"

"How could I do otherwise, in the face of so much kindness?"

"Nay, nay! it is your *country*, not *me*, I would want you to serve. Only if you are ready, and determined to use the power of your office for the good of your country in good and bad luck, are we ready to give you your commission, and receive into our hand your vow of fealty."

"Be it then as your Majesty says!" replied Feller, deeply moved by the words of the king. "You honor me highly by this unlooked for trust; and so help me God! you shall not be disappointed in your expectations. Send me, when and where you will, you will always find me a true and faithful servant."

"Spoken like a true patriot!" said the king, again pressing the hand of the councilor. "Your commission is made out and signed; for, to tell you the honest truth, I expected no thing less from an honorable man like you. How soon can you be ready to depart?"

"As soon as your Majesty commands."

"To-day, then?"

"To-day, if needs be."

"It needs indeed; but we might arouse the indignation of your ladies by hurrying you off too quickly. They will most likely want to accompany you, and we therefore give you a respite of twenty-four hours."

"And my instructions?"

"You will find a few hints in this paper. As to the rest we give you *carte blanche*."

The counsellor took his leave and reached the house as in a dream. Was it really true? Had he, an avowed opponent of the war-party, been actually intrusted with one of the most important offices of the country? He could hardly believe it; but while he despaired of accounting for this sudden freak of fortune, he felt that it would never do to disappoint the confidence the king had placed in his ability and integrity. He therefore repeated to himself the vow he had deposited with the king, and

thus in a short hour a bitter enemy of German Unity had been converted into a supporter.

When Captain Haller, on the next morning, marched the last troops of his division to the depot, he was surprised to see the shutters of Feller's mansion closed.

Had the family departed? And if so, whither had it gone?

These questions Captain Haller asked him self with an anxious mind.

On the same evening he too was whirled towards the spot, where the furies of war were ready to break loose with unparalleled ferocity. Let us hasten to witness the beginning of the fearful struggle!

CHAPTER V.

The French line leaves the Rhine near the fortified town of Lautersburg, and runs nearly due west along the French towns of Weissenburg and Bitch, and the Prussian town of Saarbrucken. Down to Morsbach it separates France from the Palatinate or Rhenish Bavaria; after that from Prussia until it strikes the territory of Luxembourg in the neighborhood of Thionville. North and south of this line a beautiful country meets the eye of the visitor. Picturesque mountains, lovely villages and winding streams relieve each other in endless variety, and form views unsurpassed in loveliness and grandeur. But that region is not merely beautiful; it is also rich and densely populated, and also teems with the richest gifts of a bounteous Providence. The lowlands produce every kind of cereals in the greatest abundance. Fruit of every description is so plentiful as to be a drug in the market. Even the hill-sides have been subservient to the purposes of man, for endless vineyards, productive of the choicest wine, and hop-gardens creep up every slope which catches the southern sunbeam. Where the declivities are by nature too steep, human industry has created artificial terraces, sometimes by building walls, sometimes by blasting away the hindering rocks. In both instances, the fertile soil was carried up by toiling labor-

ers, a process almost incomprehensible to the American mind, but richly productive, where the population is dense and the land scarce, and where, moreover, such labor will be paid by a vintage yielding a highly superior beverage.

Alsatia resembles in character somewhat the western portion of Pennsylvania, excepting however the mineral wealth of the latter. Coal is wanting in the bowels of her mountains, and the French therefore looked with jealousy upon Rhenish Prussia, where an inferior coal is found in great abundance. But even without this feature Alsatia is such a rich jewel in the crown of France, that she watches it with zealous care—doubly zealous perhaps, because it was originally a stolen one. So well was she pleased with it, that she pounced upon a shallow pretext, to annex the neighboring German provinces. For this purpose her armies had been marshalled and stationed near the border to enter the coveted territory as soon as the needful preparations were completed. But there the trouble came in. The reckless, hasty manner in which the French had plunged into this war, manifested itself in every branch of the service. Not only did the numbers fall short of the paper-estimates; but the commissariat, the sanitary department, the train: everything was in a miserable condition and caused fatal delays which for a while were made plausible to the world on the plea of the emperor's bad health, but the true cause of which was destined to leak out in a fearful manner at an early date.

The center of the French army rested on Forbach under General Frossart; the left wing stood at Thionville under Ladmirault; the right at Weissenburg under McMahon. With the latter we shall soon come in nearer contact and to him therefore we must direct our special attention.

His head-quarters were near Froschweiler, a village on the heights behind the town of Wœrth, about fifteen miles southwest of Weissenburg. He had taken up his abode in the villa of Monsieur Dupre, Imperial Collector for Northern Alsatia. The villa stood a rifle shot from the village, shaded and protected by the seam of a large forest, which stretches away for miles in a north-western direction. The villa and its surroundings spoke of the wealth, if not the taste of the owner. In it the duke of

Magenta had every reason to feel comfortable, for besides the splendor which surrounded him, and of which he had always shown himself to be very fond, he could indulge in another penchant of his, namely, the passion for handsome women. The discipline of the French army was not so strict, as to prevent the wives of many officers and also female adventurers of more than doubtful character to accompany the army, and on this occasion the fair ones had not failed to benefit by this indulgence, and quartered themselves in the spacious villa of Monsieur Dupre as well as the tavern, the parsonage and private dwellings of Froschweiler.

Monsieur Dupre was a widower and father of a grown-up son who went under the brilliant name of Alcibiades, without however possessing those alluring qualities which made his namesake, the ancient Athenian, so irresistible. His father, however, thought him a very hopeful young man, in which opinion Alcibiades most heartily concurred, although it was shared by nobody else. To judge from the scanty supply of coarse sandy hair, which Monsieur Dupre the younger raised on his head, the soil underneath was not very fertile. His whiskers on the other hand were dense and luxuriant, and mischievous acquaintances professed to account for this from the fact that Alcibiades used his jaws much more frequently than his brains. The features of the young man were commonplace, and would have left a casual observer indifferent, if a sly expression of the eye and a trait of coarse sensuality around the mouth had not awakened a slight distrust. M. Dupre the elder, however, was rich and his son therefore passed everywhere for "a good fellow." Some of those who secretly laughed at Alcibiades' pretensions to wit, beauty and amiability, were insincere enough to strengthen them by their adulations, because these adulations secured them good lodgings, good dinners and good times at the hospitable villa of the father generally.

The household did not suffer much by Monsieur Dupre's being a widower; for it was presided over by an old spinster-sister of his who prided herself on uniting in her person the virtues of a good housekeeper and the manners of the imperial court. The family seemed to have a passion for classic names, for besides

Monsieur Alcibiades and Monsieur Duprə, the elder, who passed by the name of Hercules, Mademoiselle Dupre had, on being christened, received the ambiguous name of Aspasia.

In justice to the worthy damsel in question, we must admit that her readings had never been extensive enough to make her familiar with the fact, that her namesake, the famous friend of Pericles, did not number chastity amongst her most prominent virtues. But even if she had known it, we could not well blame her for a selection in which she had had no voice. If she was without the charms of the ancient Aspasia, she surely was without her vices. Her character was spotless, and sundry little weaknesses (in her opinion the Dupres in general, and her own person in particular, occupied the first rank) did not prevent her from filling her position to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Besides the parties described, two more persons belonged to the family. They went by the names of Victor and Pauline Delmont and were the children of Dupre's sister. They were orphans, and wards under the tutelage of their uncle in whose house they had found a home ever since the death of their parents. Victor had embraced the military profession, and advanced to the rank of first lieutenant. He was a Frenchman in the true sense of the word; that is, he possessed the virtues as well as the faults of the "*great nation.*" He had received an education, but acquired no erudition. He knew *multa*, but not *multum*; *many things*, but not *much*, as the Latins had it. He had read more than he had studied; committed more than he had digested. He had a good deal of wit; but comparatively little common sense. His patriotism was only surpassed by his national pride; his sense of honor by his touchiness. He showed more enthusiasm than energy; more ardor than perseverance. In appearance he was handsome, and his education had made the most of these physi cal advantages. He had been taught to walk, ride and dance to perfection, and the court-circles of Paris had left so clear an impress on his manners, that he was received with open arms, whereever he went. The ladies especially were unanimous in pronouncing him 'excellent company," and as he possessed a considerable stock of gallantry, he managed to devote to the service of the fair sex the hours which he could conveniently spare from the service of his

country. The recent call to arms had opened visions of glory to the young lieutenant; it had also given him an opportunity to pay a flying visit to his uncle's villa, and boast to the ladies, what miracles of bravery he was determined to perform. In his aunt he found a willing listener, but his sister Pauline was too much matter-of-fact, to enjoy descriptions which, tho' graphic, had too much of the air-castle-nature to suit her practical mind. She would often listen with grave attention, and then all at once interrupt the speaker with a remark, seemingly so innocent, and yet so poignant, that it had the same effect on him, as the windmills on Don Quixote, i. e. to throw him out of the saddle.

But here we talk about Miss Delmont, without a previous introduction to the reader. Let us quickly repair our error.

Miss Pauline was a handsome brunette, anfl numbered nineteen years. If I did not fear to become trite, I would say, that if her brother represented the true French*man*, she represented the true French*woman*. It would be true at least; nor do I in either case attach a reproach to the epithet. We all have our faults, nations as well as individuals, and the positive vice of one may be a negative virtue in another. If it is true that the Frenchman can learn from the German, it is no less true that, in many things, the German can with advantage imitate the Frenchman.

We want the reader, then, to understand that Mademoiselle Pauline was a really charming woman. If her aunt was the regulating spirit of the household, she could in truth be called the animating, beautifying one. Her light, lithe figure glided so buoyantly, so noiselessly over the ground, that one had to look sharply to ascertain whether she owed her progress to her feet or some other agency. Wherever she went she was the center of attraction, much to the regret of Dupre the elder whose favorite hobby was a match between his son and his niece, and of Dupre the younger, whose thoughts were of a more selfish character, without differing in substance. Father and son were anxious to secure this fair price, not so much on account of its mental qualities, but because Miss Delmont was the fortunate proprietress of a fortunc not much inferior to that of the Dupres. It was quite acceptable that Pauline was handsome; that she had received an education, qualifying her for the highest circles; that she could

talk, sing and play well; but much more acceptable were her bank-stocks, her broad acres which lay so conveniently to their own that the desire of an annexation sprang up almost spontaneously. It is possible that Alcibiades may have had another inducement to seek her hand; it is possible that he may have felt a strong sensual desire to become the lord and master of so many charms; but more than this he could hardly claim. We do not appreciate what we do not comprehend, and so we may safely assert that Pauline's numerous mental gifts and qualities remained to Monsieur Alcibiades a closed book. This the young lady was smart enough to see, and if she listened to his protestations with seeming patience, it was surely for the same purpose with which she tolerated her brother's bombastic orations for a while, namely to confound the confident suitor so much more completely.

Since the arrival of McMahon, affairs had assumed a grand character at the villa. It harbored not only the marshall and his staff, but also the large retinue of both, not to count several lady-guests, each of whom claimed more room and attention than half-a-dozen men. If we add to this the guards and sentinels; the adjutants, messengers and orderlies coming and going; the troops quartered in the village and bivouacking in the village; the line; the zouaves; the Turcos; the chevaux-legers, dragoons and cuirassiers; the chasseurs on foot and on horseback; if, I say, we add this to the picture so lively in itself, we get a total which does not often fall to the lot of man to behold. To-day the French troops at Froschweiler showed the bright side of war—little did they dream of the sad spectacle they were destined to represent at the self-same spot a few days hence.

The "to-day" alluded to was the second day of August. It was already drawing to a close, and the brilliant company had gathered around the dinner-table in the "grand salon" of the villa. There was the Duke of Magenta in his splendid chasseur-uniform, covered with medals, orders and badges; there was his staff, rivalling in array with the chief; there the fair sex in full dress; the host with his good-natured face and obliging smile. A lively conversation was flying around the table, for the soldier, gay as a rule, is doubly so before the impending battle. The fiery wines from the host's cellar had added their share, to

animate the company and the duke, instead of checking the general mirth, was the very person to foster and enjoy it. Numerous healths had been drunk, and the meal was drawing to conclusion, when all at once the door was opened and a parcel of letters handed to the marshal. This caused a lull in the conversation, for a battle was momentarily expected, and some of the papers in the marshal's hand might possibly contain the coveted news of a victory. For a victory it must be, of course; how could defeat befall the glorious armies of the *great nation*?

And indeed their expectations proved correct. The small, firm features of McMahon became animated, his eyes shot fire and rising to his feet, he said in joyous tones to the breathless assembly:

"My friends, allow me to congratulate you on our first achievement. A great battle has been fought, and the birds of victory have perched as usual upon the standards of our army."

A general commotion ensued. Some shouted "hurrah!"; others made their glasses ring, and drank to the continued success of the French arms. Through this tumult, numerous demands for details made themselves heard.

"Where? When was it? What troops were engaged? How did it go? Give us the details!"

These and similar questions and summons reached the marshal's ear.

"I have only a short telegram from the emperor," he said; "and the writing is so fine, that my old eyes find difficulty in making it out. Lieutenant, will you have the goodness to read it to the company?"

These words were addressed to Victor Dupre. The young man rose respectfully, and taking the telegram read as follows:

FORBACH, Aug. 2nd, 4.20. P. M.

My dear Marshal!

We gained a victory at Saarbrucken. The division under Frossart routed and nearly annihilated 3 Prussian divisions. Louis and I were present. The prince was cool and collected, and picked up a Prussian ball which fell at his feet. The soldiers wept at the sight. We are going to Metz.

Yours

LOUIS.

This announcement was received with stormy applause.

"Vive l' empereur! Vive la France! Vive l' armee!"

These shouts arose in tumultuous confusion and informed the outsiders, that something unusual had occurred. Soon the news of the victory penetrated to the rank and file, and the shouts and huzzas of the staff were echoed in the village and the bivouac, and the success of the French arms drunk with the same ardor, tho' in inferior wine.

But what, if these brave men—for that they are brave, cannot well be disputed—if these brave men, I say, had known, that they were performing the most ridiculous version of "Much ado about nothing" the world had ever seen? What, if they had known, that this glorious victory consisted in nothing but a four hours' fight between 700 Prussians and 30.000 Frenchmen? I think they would have risen in indignation and crushed a power that thought it necessary to treat its soldiers with the same food that had been prepared for the washwomen, the gossips and swaggerers of Paris. German valor has dealt severely with France; but French lying has surely done her an injury not much inferior. A Government which deems it necessary to keep up the spirit of its armies with bogus news, is not worthy to lead brave men into the field.

But to return to our dinner-party. After the excitement had somewhat abated, they became rescated, and McMahon proceeded to open and read the other papers which had been handed to him. All at once he looked up and handed Mr. Dupre a paper bearing an official seal.

"I am happy to see that your petition has been granted," he said. "You will see from this that Monsieur your son has been appointed chief clerk in the commissary department. Permit me to offer my heart-felt congratulations and at the same time excuse my presence, as some of these papers require my immediate attention."

He arose and shook hands with his host and Alcibiades, around whom the whole company now crowded to offer their congratulations. After the duke had withdrawn, the company scattered in the various rooms and formed such groups as chance or inclination are apt to produce. Pauline for her part separated from the crowd and slipped into one of the recesses which the thick walls

of the ancient building formed at the windows, and amused herself with looking down upon the gay life which spread out far and near before her eyes. A lace curtain separated her from the company and allowed her to enjoy the novel sight without disturbance. The approaching twilight caused numberless camp fires to dive up in the forest and around the village, and to throw their lurid shine upon the picturesque groups around them. Half-a-dozen military airs, sung by as many parties, mingled with the distant sounds of a band which performed the stirring tune of the Marseillaise. The scene was truly enchanting, and the young lady willingly lent ear and eye to drink it in, when she was suddenly and disagreably interrupted by a voice in her ear, which said:

"Is it fair, cousin, to thus deprive us of your company?"

"At least as fair, Monsieur Alcibiades, as to frighten a body in that way and drive away the prettiest fancies by a common-place compliment."

"Pardon me Pauline; but I missed you in the crowd, and could not resist the temptation of seeking you, and learning, why you alone abstained from felicitating me upon my new appointment."

"*Why*, Alcibiades? Indeed, I could hardly tell you. The slight was not intentional tho', merely an oversight. Perhaps you will pardon me if I make amends by offering *now* a double share of good wishes."

"Of course I will Pauline. Somehow I cannot get myself to be angry with you, if you neglect me ever so much."

"I never mean to, Alcibiades, depend upon it."

"So much the better cousin. Only I fear, you do not care for me either. Sometimes I imagine that I would rather see you angry than indifferent."

"Why, you are melancholy to-night cousin. You look too gloomily upon these matters."

"Perhaps I do; but such thoughts have haunted me all evening. When you abstained from speaking with me about the clerkship, I could not help saying to myself: She avoids me; she is silent; could she possibly be sad at the thought of our early parting? If so, you would consider yourself a lucky fellow Alcibiades."

"But it is not so, Sir; it is not so!" she exclaimed rather more

eagerly than the occasion seemed to warrant. She felt it too, as soon as the words had left her lips and coloring up, she corrected herself by saying:

"That is,—I meant to say—of course I am sorry to lose you; we all are you know. Only I dont want you to think,—you mnst not imagine—there! you see, you have put me entirely out with your melancholy reflections."

"I am sorry for it, cousin. I am also sorry, you dont grieve a little more than the rest, to lose me. For my part, I regret more to leave you, than all the rest taken together."

"I thank you for the compliment, Alcibiades" she said with increasing nervousness "but let us quit this strain, if you please. What do you think of the strange view, one enjoys from this window?"

"Not much Pauline, to tell the truth. I dont think of anything much, these days, excepting you. Nay dont get angry, cousin, I have to trouble you just a little longer. I have over and over again hinted and stated to you, how mach I think of you, and over and over again have you given me the slip. Come! speak honestly, speak plainly now! Tell me, whether, when far away, I may think of you as one who is willing to link her lot with mine in good and evil days? Tell me, in short, whether I may consider and announce you as my betrothed bride."

"Ah! you are getting too fast, Sir cousin," she replied, trying to laugh her embarrassment away. "It is evident you have been infected with the martial spirit of the times!"

"There! you are again trying to evade me, Pauline. Is it so hard, to give a plain answer!"

"Indeed then, it is, Sir. Marriage is an important matter, you know, and ought to receive due consideration."

"Well, I for my part *have* considered it these two years."

"But I haven't, you see, and there is where the difference comes in. Go, write orders, copy accounts, draw up bills, add and subtract. In the mean time I shall duly ponder upon this matter and, when you return, give you a fair, square and plain answer."

"I would much rather have it *now* Pauline. It would nerve me in the hardships and dangers of my new profession."

"Provided it sounded *yes*, you mean? But to think of the

hardships and dangers of a commissary-clerk! He sweats over his copies, his head swims over his accounts, and the weary hand sinks under the weight of the pen. But the hardships are trifling when compared with the dangers. The pen-point may penetrate his bosom, the ink engulf, the deficit swallow him. An invoice of lead may crush him, a bill of nitro-glycerine explode him. What are the perils of the battle-field in comparison with those of the commissariat."

The mischievous girl had uttered these tirades with an expression of comical despair, to indulge afterwards in a merry laugh at her own wit. Monsieur Alcibiades on his part seemed to fail in discovering the fun, for his face assumed a savage aspect, and his eyes shot glances so ugly, that the lady might well have started, if she had noticed them. As the case stood, she was too much occupied in her merriment to do anything but laugh. Indeed, she only stopped when he said with a loud and angry voice:

"You make fun of me—it is well. I offered you love and friendship—you refused them. I now declare war to you, war to the bitter end, refuse or not refuse. You will soon learn at your cost, what it means, to have Alcibiades Dupre for an enemy."

She stood aghast at this exhibition of fierce passion which was evidently a new feature in the young man's character. When he arose to leave, she started up and made au attempt to conciliate him.

"Stop Alcibiades!" she said, laying her hand upon his arm "We must not part this way. I am sorry, if I have wounded your feelings. I did not mean to. Surely my words contained nothing to justify your towering passion."

"So? you think not? You think it is pleasant to be for ever the butt of your wit and at the same time see your affection thrown away upon a fellow who is a mere adventurer and an enemy of our country in the bargain."

She colored up and said with real or pretended surprise:

"What do you mean Sir? You talk at random. Can it be that your father's wine inspires your words?"

"Oh! I am completely sober, and you know it. True, you have always treated me like a fool; but I am not quite so silly as all that. Did you think I had not noticed the fancy you took to

that Bavarian fop at the Paris exhibition? You feasted on his sight, when with him, and you thought of him, in his absence. It is two years now, since he gave the police the slip; but you need not deny that you still think of him, for I know better. Your refusal to listen to my wishes, your fitful moods, your alternate spells of grief and merriment; everything tells me that I am sacrifized to the memory of a miserable, and yet fortunate rival. But I repeat, what I said before. You shall not despise my enmity, as you despised my friendship, and if ever I cross the path of this contemptible puppy, who crossed my purpose, I shall crush him—and you too, if need be,—by fair and foul means. Remember!"

With these words he disappeared, leaving her in a strange condition. She wondered at the strange change which the young man had all at once undergone. Thus far he had universally appeared in the role of the dunce, and she had treated him in accordance with his role. Now at once he shows himself wide-awake, fierce, implacable. Whence this sudden change? It cannot be jealousy alone, for the meeting of which he spoke, dates two years back, and yet he had never shown himself in this light until to-day. Could it be barely possible that he feared a meeting in the coming war? It was so improbable, almost impossible! And yet she dwelled with tenacity upon that thought; her eyes shone and her pulse quickened. Can it be that her cousin was after all not so far from the truth? She indignantly denies it to herself, when this self-same question presents itself for solution. "A mere adventurer!" she exclaims inwardly; "a fugitive from the imperial police, and—" oh! what a riddle is the heart—a truant to a certain young lady, to whom his eyes had unmistakably spoken volumes of love. In the opinion of Miss Pauline, the last offence of the individual in question was evidently the blackest; for when this thought took shape in her mind, her brow contracted. She rose hastily and with quickened step, left the room.

CHAPTER VI.

On the German side of the line the scene was perhaps as lively, as on the French; but it was surely much more orderly. Everybody there knew his duty and the development of the national resources proceeded with a dispatch and yet a regularity, truly wonderful under the circumstances. France, which, as the chal lenger, might be presumed to have been ready, hesitated for two precious weeks, and was but poorly prepared even then. Prussia, which had been surprised in a measure, managed to throw her scattered legions in eleven days to the banks of the Rhine. When they arrived there, they were ready to attack. So dense a concentration of half a million men could not help causing an occasional tightness; but tightness is no disorder and the great German anaconda soon loosened its coils, to tighten a grip around the foe which held him as in a vice, and was never slackened, until it laid him, a helpless prey, at the feet of an insulted nation.

If there was not so much gayety in the German camps, there was more cheerfulness. You heard no vain boasts of glorious deeds to be achieved; but you read upon every face the determination to conquer or to die. The leaders were not sanguine and expectant of something lucky to turn up; but they set to work and laid their plans with so much skill and accuracy, that they found no difficulty in changing a defensive warfare into an offensive one. They had at first been merely prepared to resist the expected invasion of the enemy but when this invasion was delayed from day to day, they took measures to carry the torch of war into the hostile country. Moltke, the king of strategians, handled his immense hosts with the same ease, as the owner of the puppet-show his figures on the stage.

"If the French delay their coming two more days," he said; "they will never see German soil."

And he was right. These momentuous words were spoken on the second of August, and early on the morning of the fourth the second Bavarian corps with Prussian regiments of the fifth and eleventh, marched across the line, and at Weissenburg inflicted upon the French the first one of the many blows, which

broke the empire, and afterwards the pseudo-republic into a thousand pieces. But before we accompany them on their bloody errand, let us cast a glance upon their camp the evening before.

The vanguard of Frederic William's army lay in the villages which line the road from Bergzabern to Weissenburg, reaching as far as Ober-Otternbach, less than two hours, march from the doomed town. It consisted of Bavarian troops, and although food and quarters were rather scarce in that neighborhood, the men maintained that good-natured cheerfulness which characterizes their nation. Infuriated as the Bavarian can become in the conflict, especially when he imagines foul play on the part of his adversary, the troubles and hardships of march and camp can only extract from him a good-natured joke or a pithy slang peculiar to his native region.

The out-posts lay in and around the Winzenmuehle, a mill situated on the turnpike, a rifle-shot north of Ober-Otternbach. They consisted of a company of jægers which had first observed the rules of a rigid discipline, and then quartered itself as comfortably as possible in the homely, but substantial chambers of the mill. The proprietor united a restaurant with the establishment, and was therefore tolerably well provided to quench the athirst of his numerous guests in excellent Bavarian beer. The large bar-room was filled to overflowing; the soldiers sat on wooden benches along a substantial table which ran all around the apartment. Before every jæger stood a "*seidel*" or large tumbler with beer, and in every-body's mouth was the unavoidable pipe, from which arose volumes of smoke so dense that the low room was filled with a bluish vapor, through which the light of the lamps struggled in vain to find its way. The officers of the company sat in a smaller room behind the first one; but they too sacrifized to Gambrinus and the tutelary spirit of tobacco, and distinguished themselves from the privates in nothing but their finer clothes and their better language. The topic of conversation also was the same in the two apartments. The wiseacres in both discussed the merits of the campaign and amended it in all such particulars as did not coincide with their superior wisdom. For a change, pithy anecdotes were told, or patriotic

songs performed with so much execution, that the old mill shook in its foundations.

It was getting late—the ninth hour drawing to its close,—when a tumult in the hall announced the fact that something unusual had taken place. Every face turned towards the door into which several persons were seen to enter; but so dense was the smoke, that only the dim outlines of the new-comers became visible. When, however, a lamp was raised, and held near their faces, the men recognized in one of them a sentinel who had been posted before the building.

"Martin!" one of the corporals in the room exclaimed; "what do you mean by running from your post? Zounds! if the Captain sees you, you'll get into a fine mess."

"Well, Sir, I could not help it," the sentinel excused himself. "We saw these two men coming from hostile ground, and challenged them according to order. They could give no satisfactory account of themselves; so I fetched them here to report to the Captain."

"What is the matter here?" a voice from the back room could now be heard, and a moment later the officer in question stood before the group.

Martin saluted and said:

"I found two suspicious men on the road, and fetched them in for examination."

"Where are they?"

"Here, Sir!"

Martin pointed to his companions, and as the lamp was brought nearer, and the excitement had caused a temporary cessation of the smoke-creating agency, the figures and faces of the strangers came pretty well into view. They were both young men well-dressed and of prepossing appearance. While the one was of slender build, and possessed a countenance of uncommon beauty, the other was sturdy enough to form a model for a Hercules. Strength, however, is generally coupled with good-nature, and in accordance with this principle, the giant really showed a face in which kindness was blended with innate intelligence. The Captain saw at once that he had to deal with men of respectability, but as the report of the sentinel placed them in a suspi-

cious light, he deemed it his duty to subject them to an examination. So he began:

"Who are you, gentlemen, and where do you come from?"

"We are travellers from Saarbrucken, and on our way to the head-quarters of the southern army."

"You are not far amiss then; but how do you account for the direction in which you approached us. I think I heard the sentinel say you came from Weissenburg?"

"We merely came from Schwingen, Sir."

"But Schwingen lies near the French lines. What business had you there?"

"We travelled that way from Saarbrucken, because we expected to find the Bavarian vanguard there."

"You were well informed then; but you failed to state the source of your information. This looks really suspicious, and if you cannot give me good proofs of your innocence, I shall be obliged to retain you, and send you to-morrow for trial to head-quarters."

The strangers looked at one another with faces in which perplexity was strangely blended with secret amusement. Before they could reply, Martin attracted the general attention by saying:

"With your permission, Captain; I would not like to say anything against them fellows, as could hurt them; but I am in duty bound to report that I heard them talk a strange gibberish, before I challenged them. I haven't heard much French in my life; but I am almost sure that the parlez-vous talk some such stuff or other."

The handsome stranger seemed to think this very amusing, for he burst into a clear laugh, in which his companion joined with a quiet chuckle. The Captain seemed vexed.

"You take matters very lightly, gentlemen," he said gravely; "but don't forget that many a spy has been shot on slighter evidence. If you have nothing more to say in explanation and defense, I may as well send you to a room up-stairs for safe keeping."

The strangers took the hint.

"One moment Captain," said the spokesman. "I had no inten

tion to trifle with you; but the suggestion of this worthy warrior struck me with such force that I could not help laughing. Can you read English, Sir?"

"Not much, Sir," said the Captain, scratching his head. "We learned it at school; but active duties like these are apt to knock such things out of a fellow's memory."

"Well, perhaps you know enough of it, to read these passes, issued by the United States of North America."

With these words, he handed the Captain two papers which that officer handled with scrupulous care.

"They seem all right," he said with greater politeness. "You are the Messrs. Miller and Schultze mentioned in these passes?"

"It is as you say, Sir."

"So you hail from the United States."

"We left them less than two weeks ago."

"And what Martin heard was English?"

"Even so, Sir Captain."

"Well, that is all right, I guess; yet I wish you could offer a satisfactory explanation of your being out at so late an hour and so strange a place. Speak openly, gentlemen, for I am really anxious to clear you."

"We see it, Sir, and shall therefore try to comply with your request. You know already that two weeks ago we breathed the air of the United States."

"You told me so."

"Exactly. Well, we were friends over there, this gentleman and I. We lived in the smoky city of Pittsburgh, and enjoyed ourselves as well as that was possible for a couple of poor fellows who had to work for their daily bread. All at once, however, the world was startled by the piece of unexampled impudence on the part of your saucy neighbors; by the emperor's attempt to browbeat our native country into submission to his arbitrary will. We were shocked at this, and, as the farce proceeded, we grew indignant. We waited impatiently for the crisis, and when we heard that King William had had the pluck to kick the insolent Frenchman out of the country, we cried "hurrah!" and hastened to the next saloon to drink his health in lager. We are

getting to be civilized over there, Captain. Our beer, if not as good as yours, is drinkable."

"I am glad to hear it, Sir," replied the Captain, trying vainly to suppress on his own countenance the smile which lit up the faces of all present. "But please to proceed. It is getting late, and the boys need slumber."

"I'm coming, Sir. We kept up the drinking until we received the news that France had declared war to *Prussia*, but that *Germany* responded. Then, Sir Captain, drinking beer did no longer satisfy us. I told my friend that I had to make a proposition, and he informed me that he was in the very same fix. I then moved that we should get our passes and embark to assist in the thrashing which the French were sure to get. My friend amended by moving that we should lose no time in putting my plan into execution. Fortunately we had saved a few dimes for rainy days. These we cashed, and hastened to New-York to embark with the next steamer. We had a pleasant voyage, and landed at Liverpool only to re-embark for Amsterdam. There we took the cars; but the nearer we came to the seat of war, the more difficulty we found in making headway. At last the chances of railroad or wagon died out, and we had to foot it the balance of the way. It was a hard road to travel, I assure you; but here we are, and if you will only give us a good chance at the red breeches over there, we shall feel ourselves fully compensated for our troubles."

During this queer speech the soldiers had crowded nearer and nearer. They overlooked the odd style of the narrator, to admire the readiness with which two distant children of Germany had hastened to her rescue in the hour of need. They seemed to feel intuitively that the speaker had only spoken as he did in order to keep down what he might deem an unmanly emotion. At all events, no sooner had he closed, when, with one accord, the hands of officers and privates were lifted and a rousing cheer shook the ceiling of the room. At the same time every one endeavored to shake hands with the volunteers, and for five minutes the tumult was too great to hear or speak any connected sentence. At last the Captain found an opportunity to express his own satisfaction at the strangers' conduct.

"Only one thing I do not understand," he added. "You were

at Saarbrucken near the Prussian forces; why did you not join them, and thus save yourselves all further trouble?"

The stranger's face assumed a queer expression.

"You want to know *why*, Captain? Very well, I shall tell you. You must know that when we, beyond the ocean, took up a German paper, and read about the attempts of a few noble men to accomplish German unity, attempts which had thus far always been frustrated by the unpatriotic action of the South, we mourned and cursed their folly, and longed for the hour when their eyes would be opened and they could see the question as *we* saw it. In America there are no Prussians and Bavarians, no Hannoverians and Saxons—we are all Germans there, and why? Because at the distance the trifling difference sinks out of sight and we see nothing but the grand and beautiful structure of a United Germany. I was born in Bavaria; my friend here hails from Hannover; but the differences of our native states did not prevent us from forming the ties of an indissoluble friendship. We found a double comfort in this friendship, because it indemnified us for a unity which we had long ago classed amongst the dreams never to be realized. Imagine, then, our astonishment, our delight, when we learned that our dream had all at once become a reality. Will you wonder, when I tell you that we feared to trust our eyes and ears? that slight doubts remained in our minds, and that we felt an irresistible desire to go right in your midst and convince ourselves that we had not been deceived? We have met with troubles and fatigues to get here; but if they had been a thousand times greater; if we should forfeit with our lives the fervent wish to assist in building up German unity, we could not have bought too dear the sight which greets our eyes to-night. Here you are, sons of the south, ready to fight side by side with the Prussian against the arch enemy of the Fatherland. Oh! receive us in your ranks! allow us to conquer at your side, or to seal with our blood the bond of unity which the wanton act of a foreign tyrant has so strangely brought about."

The scene which followed beggars description. Shout rose after shout; men, no longer content with shaking hands, rushed into each other's arms and wept tears of joy. The volunteers were solemnly received into the company, an act for which the Cap-

tain promised to secure the sanction of his superiors. The banquet was resumed, and continued, until the peremptory order of the Captain drove everybody to his couch.

"I would not care," he said, with a smile; "but it is more than likely that we shall meet the foe to-morrow. On such an occasion I shall want no sleepy-heads."

This had the desired effect. Ten minutes afterwards deep tranquility reigned in the mill, and was not interrupted, until at break of dawn the reveille called the men to their places.

CHAPTER VII.

Breakfast was this time dispatched in a hurry, for hardly had the clock on the steeple of Ober-Otternbach struck four, when the bugle sounded the signal to form in ranks. In less than five minutes our jægers stood on the turnpike in rank and file to be mustered by their officers. The American volunteers were also on hand, and the Captain's eye dwelled with pleasure on their fine forms and the warlike fire which beamed from their eyes. He thought he noticed something peculiar in their looks, without being able to discover what it was. We could have informed him. The strangers had tasted liberty; they had breathed the air of a country where every citizen is a sovereign. The other soldiers also stood erect—discipline had taught them—but you saw at once that it was merely something assumed, unaccompanied by the lofty consciousness of the republican. Yet they too were more than mere machines in this war; patriotism had kindled a fire in their hearts which shone through their eyes and nerved their arms. To the elevated position of the republican, however, they could not rise, simply because they had no conception either of his privileges or his duties.

The company had hardly formed, when an officer on horse back came galloping along the road. All eyes were turned towards him, and when he came nearer, the faces assumed an expression of recognition. The company presented arms, and the horseman saluted with his sword.

"Good morning, Bohlen," he greeted the Captain.

"Good morning, Haller. What is the news?"

"Excellent, Captain; for in one hour you will have the pleasure of engaging the enemy."

The company gave a hearty cheer.

"Do you see those trains?" Haller continued. "They are full of troops; and when they have deployed, the dance will open."

"And my orders?" asked the Captain.

"Are, to deploy your company as skirmishers across the road to the hills on the right, and keep in feeling with the line on your left. A cannon-shot will give you the signal for formation, a second one for advancing. Keep your troops well in hand, for the fight may be broken off at any minute."

"I hope it won't, though."

"So do I. But what is this? Two of your men in civil dress! What does it mean?"

"Ah! that is quite a story. They are volunteers, and where do you think they come from?"

"I cannot guess."

"Well, then, they hail no further than America. They joined us late last night."

"From America? Good for them! But they must be uniformed; the General will tolerate no such irregularities."

"That's what I thought; so I sent my orderly back to our baggage to fetch a couple of uniforms, two guns and accoutrements. It will be difficult, though, to fit that tall fellow. He takes cloth enough for two common uniforms."

"He looks as if he would fight for two, as well."

"So he does. But here comes my orderly. Corporal, let the two volunteers go to the mill and slip on the uniforms; but quick, for the troops are forming fast, and we must be ready for the signal."

The strangers obeyed the order, and when they returned, ten minutes later, the metamorphosis had succeeded as well as could be expected. Miller's uniform was a perfect fit, and Schultze's did well enough, although he looked much like a tall boy who had out-grown his clothes. The soldiers rallied him on his appearance, telling him that he ought to have sent his measure before-

hand by telegraph. At this he laughed, and told them that he intended to kill the first Turco-giant that came across him, and slip into his clothes to scare them into better manners. These good-natured railleries were still flying from mouth to mouth, when, all at once, the boom of a cannon shook the air and created an expectant silence in the company.

"Attention, company!" commanded the Captain.

The men obeyed with alacrity, casting, at the same time, curious glances at the Americans to see how they acquitted themselves of the manœuvre. However, if they had expected to enjoy some fun at their expense, they were mistaken; for Miller and Schultze went through their steps with faultless accuracy.

"By George," said a fellow in their neighborhood; "you know some pumpkins."

"Well, what do you think?" replied Schultze, with a mock expression of injured dignity. "Miller was General over there, and I was Colonel."

"Hugh! what a yarn! With the regulars, of course?"

"No, with the colored militia."

"What? Do they dye the landwehr over there?"

"I mean the negroes."

"Ah! now I see; a kind of Turco-General?"

"Exactly."

By this time, the company had reached the desired position, stretching in skirmish-fashion across the turnpike up to the foot of the steep hills on the right. As they were not to advance until the second cannon-shot, they had time to look around and observe the interesting spectacle developing before their eyes.

The railroad-trains had, by this time, disgorged their human freight and backed out of sight. Troops of all kinds moved into position. Batteries galloped to some elevations from which they could effectually belch forth their iron hail against the enemy. Light troops unraveled into a long line, which evidently aimed at connection with our jægers. Magnificent bodies of cavalry reined their horses in the rear, dashing hither and thither and waiting impatiently for the time, when they too were to enter

the bloody fray. Behind the skirmishers solid regiments of the line went into position to back their efforts, and here and there adjutants galloped across the plain, ventre-a-terre, to convey the orders of the commanders to the different troops.

Half-an-hour passed during these preparations, and an impressive silence lay on the region, when, all at once, a second boom shook the air.

"Forward, march! march!" sounded the command, and the line of skirmishers began to advance. They marched through Otterbach and Rechtenbach without seeing a trace of the enemy; but when they emerged from Schwingen, the last Bavarian village before Weissenburg, the dark faces of the Turcos began to dive up amongst the gardens and vineyards.

"Colonel Schultze, there is your landwehr," cried a voice, and shouts of laughter rewarded the joke.

"Tell them to stop a moment," cried another; "we want to get a look at them."

"Never you fear!" said the giant. "Dont you see they stop already? There, they bid us good morning."

The chassepots began to crack amongst the grapevines, and the bullets to whistle around the ears of our jægers. But this only quickened their motions, and soon the needle-gun began to reply. Here and there a man dropped in the line, but the gap was filled and the advance continued. The Turcos in front of the company gave way until they reached the toll-gate. There a number of them threw themselves into the custom-house, a small one-story brick building, and opened such a galling fire upon the skirmishers that their advance became checked.

"That will never do," cried Captain Bohlen, flourishing his sword; "we must clean that nest out. Forward, children! follow me!"

On they went with a cheer, led by the Captain; but those words were destined to be the last of the brave officer. Before he had made a dozen steps, a bullet penetrated his heart and stretched him dead on the ground. His men saw it and uttered a shriek of rage. The first lieutenant led them on at double quick; but a

minute later, the hand that flourished the lifted sword sank to the side, a bullet having broken the arm above the elbow. The brave man took the weapon in his left, and attempted to proceed; but the pain was too great, and he saw himself compelled to fall back. Again the men wavered, and there was danger of a retrograde movement, when all at once Miller sprang before the line.

"Follow me, boys!" he cried; "we must avenge our captain Part to the right and left to take the building from the flank. One half with me, boys,—Shultze, take the rest, and now forward with God for Fatherland!"

These spirited words restored the confidence of the men. Willingly they followed the movements of the improvised leaders, and, withdrawing from the front, assailed the building from the two flanks. There were no windows there, and the men therefore reached the walls without further loss. Attacking the front and back doors at the same time, they soon gained access to the building, and dispatched the bewildered savages with a well-directed volley. When they emerged again, Miller stepped up to the officer, who, after the disabling of the captain and first lieutenant, was entitled to the command.

"Pardon my forwardness," he said. "I forgot, in my excitement, that I encroached on your prerogatives."

"Say nothing more," replied the noble fellow. "You did it better than I could have done it. I shall not fail to report your brave conduct at head-quarters, if I live."

"Hurrah for our lieutenant!" cried the soldiers who had heard the request and the rejoinder. "Hurrah for General Miller and Colonel Schultze!"

But the battle had not stood still meanwhile. The jægers had to move in double quick to reach the line of their comrades, who had gained on the enemy. In this they succeeded; but it soon became obvious that the masses of the opposing foe were growing too dense and powerful to be driven by mere skirmishers. They seemed to recognize this fact at headquarters; for all at once Captain Haller made his appearance on his foam-covered horse, and brought the order for the men to close up in double lines and to allow fresh troops to form on the right and left. This manœuvre he superintended in person, forming an excellent mark for the

French sharpshooters, who fired at him whole platoons at a time; but although his uniform was cut in various places, and the helmet shot from off his head, he escaped unharmed. In the midst of all these dangers he preserved the greatest tranquility, and his voice was so free from excitement, that the men also became cool and collected, and received the whistling bullets with the greatest composure. At this moment the roar of cannon mingled in the conflict, and the bombshells began to sing their hideous song and to explode over the German ranks. Amidst the dismal music the order to advance was given, and so vigorously did the brave Bavarians press the Turcos, that they turned and sought refuge behind the walls of Weissenburg which had once been a fortified town. A dry moat was still perceptible at many places, and where it was filled, high stone walls surrounded the gardens and vineyards belonging to the place. The city-gates were narrow, massive arches, joined on either side by substantial walls and buildings. Wooden draw-bridges led from them across the dry ditch, and if the reader adds to this the circumstance that the place was garrisoned by a numerous and enraged foe, he will admit that the task of storming it was no trifle.

Yet it was accomplished. When the French had been driven into the precints of the town, the Bavarian batteries first spat a furious rain of shell and shot at and over the unfortunate place, and then prepared to storm. Again we meet our brave bataillon of jægers as the first in the fray. At the German gate, the conflict raged with unexampled fury. Like Horatius Cocles of old, a few brave Frenchmen had posted themselves on the narrow draw-bridge to defend the passage through that gate. They fought with the greatest bravery, and sent many a foe into the ditch on the right or left, before they in turn were overcome. Those behind them in the arched passage also poured an incessant shower of bullets upon the storming jægers, and thereby raised in their bosoms a rage which finally became irresistible. It was here and then that Colonel Schultze showed himself in his glory. The men could afterwards find no words to describe the frightful fury of his onset. He had managed to out-distance his comrades, and to reach the gateway before all others. Having arrived there, he seized his gun by the barrel, and swung it around his head with a force

that laid an enemy low at every blow. There was something demon-like in the appearance that made the French shrink back in utter dismay, and enabled the jægers to reach the open space within the gate. There they began to spread and to drive the foe toward the centre of the town. The enclosures around the gardens had also been carried in the meantime, and everything promised a speedy termination of the fight, when all at once the arrival of fresh forces on the part of the French not only stayed the flight, but threatened to turn the tide of the battle against the Germans. It soon became evident that they had an entirely insufficient force at their disposal. The zeal of the Bavarians had carried them too far. They fought, a single army-corps, against an overwhelming strength, and it soon became evident that they must either be reinforced or give way. These reinforcements are on their way,—Prussian regiments of the fifth and eleventh corps—but they have not yet arrived. The situation becomes critical. Adjutant after adjutant rides to the heights on the left of Schwingen, where Frederic William, in the company of General Blumenthal, conducts the battle.

"They cannot hold out!" is the universal cry.

"They *must.* Tell the brave fellows that succor will reach them in half an hour."

At this moment Captain Haller presents himself before the Crown-Prince.

"Will you Royal Highness allow me to join the fight? I drilled these bataillons and my presence may be of service."

The prince looked with evident satisfaction into this noble face, to which the fiery enthusiasm of the hour lent an uncommon beauty.

"Be it as you say, Captain," he replied. "Only remember, that I shall claim a certain Captain Haller of your hands to-night."

"That is, as God may will it," they young man replied. Then saluting the chief he gave his horse the spurs and galloped down the hill with a rapidity which showed him to be in dead earnest. Before the drawbridge the horse reared at the heap of human bodies; but his master's voice calmed it and soon its shoes drew fire from the pavement of the streets. Near the scene of conflict the Captain halted and let his eye wander over the

surroundings, in order to gain an idea of the situation and act accordingly. The battle was nearly stationary, the two contesting parties struggling for the possession of the marked-place, an open square in the center of the town. Yet his experienced eye discovered a slight wavering in the German ranks and knowing, how easily such vacillation may turn into a rout, he hastened to reassure the masses. With drawn word he rode into the foremost ranks and tried to gain the car of the soldiers.

"Steady lads!" he cried, "the Prussians will be with you in a minute. This way with you battery. Open the ranks boys and let them through."

A cheer rewarded his efforts. The promise of reinforcements revived the flagging spirits and caused the fight to gain new life. The cannons were posted, loaded with cannister ank fired into the street from which the enemy exercised the greatest pressure. It had a salutary effect and for a moment caused the French to recoil. Still they felt their advantage too keenly, to suffer themselves to be so easily deprived of it, and returning shot for shot, stormed with growing impetuosity against the German position. The Germans, however, refused to yield, and so the battle again assumed the character of the most fearful hand-to-hand fight. In this their superior physical strength and the narrow place of conflict gave them a temporary advantage, but it conld not escape Haller's watchful eye, that the French were advancing through side streets and threatening to cut off the German retreat. In this dilemma the heavy tramp of the approaching Prussian guards sounded to him the sweetest music he had ever heard. He galloped towards them to direct their movements.

"Deploy to the right and left," he cried; "we can hold our own."

Then returning to his men he communicated to them the cheerful news.

"Our friends are coming!" he cried, jumping from his horse. "Forward is the word now."

And forward they went with a will, the French again taking to their heels, until the entire town was in the hands of the Germans.

But the task was only half finished even then. The French re-

treated to the strong position of the Gaisberg, the commencement of the famous Weissenburg lines which Marshal Villiers caused to be constructed in 1705, and which reached from there to the Rhine, running along the western brow of the hills which crown the valley of the Lauter. To see this and to rush to a second assault was the work of a minute. Perhaps this might have been avoided; for the prospective advance of the second Prussian army would have made the position untenable; but there are moments in war, when the martial spirit of the troops cannot be checked, and—if this were possible—ought not to be checked.

Such a moment had arrived. Without waiting for orders from headquarters, the troops clamored to be led against the hill, and now began a race in which Prussian and Bavarian displayed the noblest emulation. The road ascends from Weissenburg gradually through vineyards and hop-gardens, until it cuts the summit of the hill and falls gently off into the valley beyond. Many of the vineyards consist of terraces built up with strong walls, offering as many bulwarks to the French from which they ought to have easily hurled their foes back into the depths below. In fact, if we look at these heights in cool blood, we declare it impossible for an assaulting party to force them from an adversary of equal or even inferior strength. And yet it was done in this memorable war, and not only at Weissenburg was it done, but also at Wœrth and at Spichern. It was moreover done with a heroism truly wonderful. It takes a martial spirit fired by the most ardent patriotism to overcome such obstacles. The Bavarians had thus far borne the brunt of the battle; they were told to rest, since the Prussians were strong enough to finish the work alone. But the brave fellows forgot that they had gone through a fatiguing march and battle; they insisted on being led against a position before which a frightful portion of their strength was soon to lie in the cold embrace of death, or in the agony of wounds, even more frightful to behold.

Our company was again under the special leadership of Captain Haller. The mutual liking which had existed between them ever since the drill on the parade, had to-day received the fiery baptism of a bloody battle. The men were ready to follow wherever he led, and *he* to undertake impossibilities, when backed by

Weissenburg.

such heroes. They climbed from terrace to terrace, doing terrible execution but suffering in proportion. The French were driven; but it could not be denied that they contested every foot of ground with the greatest obstinacy. On the last terrace, the struggle was the severest. The French seemed to feel that they must keep this position or give up the battle. They fought accordingly. Wherever a German climbed the wall, a bayonet, a bullet or the butt end of a musket was ready to dispute his advance. Haller grew impatient. Benefiting by the skill which all Prussian soldiers are compelled to acquire in gymnastics, he climbed the terrace in advance of his followers. Turning to encourage them, he failed to notice that two Turcos singled him out for a common assault. One of them leveled his gun at his back, and the other reached out to dash out his brains with a blow of his rifle-butt. Haller's danger is imminent; his fate seems sealed. Before succor can reach him, the shot of one Turco or the blow of the other must surely terminate his existence. But the crisis brings also unexpected assistance. The two Americans have kept near his person, evidently attracted by the cool courage which speaks from every word and gesture. Perhaps they have also resolved to shield him, in case his advanced position exposes him to extraordinary dangers. Now they are on hand and come to his assistance. Miller's gun is not loaded, and the fellow shooting at the Captain is beyond the reach of his bayonet. To load again would be too late; so he quickly puts his hand into his bosom and drawing forth a revolver, fires it at the Turco as soon as it comes into line. To judge from the effect, Miller must be no novice in the use of that weapon; for the Turco receives the bullet in his right eye and breaks down as if his legs had been shot from under him. He seems to have had his finger on the trigger, for his gun goes off and the bullet whistles in dangerous proximity to the Captain's head. Miller, however, has no time to notice this, for the second Turco claims his attention. Fortunately that gentleman is already watched by Schultze or Miller's assistance might have been too late, in spite of his quickness. As it is, the giant has seen the mischievous intentions of the Arab, and taken measures to prevent them. Seizing his left leg, he gives him a jerk powerful enough to land him on the platform below. There he lifts him

up with both hands, and, throwing him to the next terrace below, exclaims:

"There, lads, is a live monkey. Take good care of him; for he is a fine specimen for the zoological garden."

After that, he again turns his attention to affairs above, apparently as unconcerned as if he did not deem this little intermezzo important enough to disturb his peace of mind. A moment afterwards he stands at the side of Captain Haller and his friend Miller, and assists them in crushing the last resistance of the French.

Fifteen minutes later their work is done. The enemies have been dislodged from the vineyards and retreat to a poplar-grove higher up the hill. The jægers are completely exhausted, and fortunately there is no further need of exertion, for fresh troops are coming ready to relieve them. So our jægers become spectators instead of actors in the fray. They see, how the royal guards charge the grove and dislodge the Turcos; they see, how batteries are planted to batter down the fort-like Gaishof which crowns the hill and forms the key to the French position. When the cannonade ceases, they again form in line and assault the stronghold. Thickly the bullets fly into their ranks, and many a brave soldier is laid low; but the onset is irresistible, and half-an-hour later, the black and white floats from the pinnacles of the castle.

The battle ceases; the enemy has been defeated, and the defeat rapidly assumes the character of a rout. The pursuit is entrusted to the horse, and now at last the brave jægers are able to enjoy their rest. It is four o'clock, as they wipe their heated brows and sit down to eat a morsel which they have taken with them for emergencies. Haller shares their scanty meal, and, stepping up to where our Americans are seated, offers his hand to both of them.

"But for you, my noble lads," he says; "I should be a corpse now. To thank you were idle. You must permit me to remain your debtor for the balance of my life."

"That's all right, Sir," replies Miller, with a merry laugh. "Only you must not suffer this debt to oppress you. Who knows what may turn up before to-morrow to make us even."

"Well, let turn up what will, you must not forget that you can

count on me in all emergencies. But listen; there is the signal for rallying. If we go it at that rate, we shall be at Paris before the month is over."

CHAPTER VIII.

That night the victorious army encamped at Sulz. The fatigue, the danger, the slaughter of the day had already been forgotten by the men with that carelessness which war invariably begets. Life, so frail in itself, is at a terrible discount then, and philosophy teaches the soldier to enjoy *to-day*, where to-morrow is so precarious.

Our jægers formed no exception. Songs, tales and anecdotes went round their camp-fires, and our Americans participated in no small degree in the general hilarity, when all at once an officer made his appearance who enquired for them, and informed them that they were wanted at head-quarters.

"Ah! I looked for that!" Miller exclaimed, with comical consternation. "They are going to lecture me on my forwardness, and tell me in due kindness to mind my business after this. Well, a fellow cannot escape his destiny. Come along, Schultze."

The two rose and followed the officer to the principal hotel of the town, where the Crown-Prince had taken his quarters. At the door they met Haller, who escorted them to the room occupied by His Royal Highness. The prince was engaged; but on seing the captain and his companions, he arose and returned their salutation with much affability.

"Shake hands, gentlemen," he said with a smile; "for that, I think, is the fashion with you across the water. I have heard so much about you through Captain Haller and others, that I was anxious to make your acquaintance."

"We are at your Highness' service," said Miller.

The prince looked with evident pleasure at the noble form of the speaker, whose demeanor was as faultless as that of a courtier.

"You call yourself Miller?" he inquired.

"That is my name, Sir."

"And you Schultze?" the prince continued, with a merry twinkle around his mouth.

"Exactly."

"Well, well, that is a strange coincidence. It sounds a good deal like a chapter from Kladradatsch. But tell me, are these fictitious names?"

"They are the names we go by," Miller replied evasively. "Our passports are at your Highness' service."

"No, no! I do not want to see them. Brave men like you are at liberty to call themselves Eisele and Beisele, Zwickauer, or Miller and Schultze as they please."

The prince laughed and seemed to enjoy his joke, while the two Americans were the prey of a slight embarrassment. The prince, however, soon put them at ease.

"Excuse me, gentlemen, for making sport of you," he said. "It was not for this, I requested your presence. I wanted to express to you my gratification at your bravery, and thank you in the name of our common country for the zeal with which you hastened to its defense."

"We thank your Highness for his goodness."

"No, no, it is we who have to thank you. But tell me, would you consent to accept a charge in my father's army."

"Your Highness is too kind; but we have formed a liking for our brave comrades from the south, and would prefer to serve with them."

"I honor your reply. We are all one now, and if you serve King Ludwig you serve my father. But that does not alter the case. I want to see you in a position corresponding with your ability. I shall appoint you lieutenants with the jægers."

"But, your Highness, we are not ambitious, and——"

"Not ambitious!" the prince interrupted him; "the deuce you are not. If you are not ambitious, why do you commit deeds that put you in every body's mouth? If *you* are not ambitious, *I* am, and my ambition prompts me to employ men like you in their proper sphere. The jægers lost heavily, I hear, and there are more than two vacancies to fill. So say nothing more

about it, and do not thank me either, for there is no occasion. And now gentlemen, let me before parting remind you that you have friends in the army, who will be pleased to hear from you occasionally. No thanks, gentlemen, no thanks! I must insist upon it. Good night to you."

Captain Haller accompanied them to the door.

"I can only repeat the Crown-Prince's words," he said on parting. "Forget not that you have friends in the army. As far as I am concerned, it gives me pleasure to inform you that we shall not lose sight of one another, as I have been appointed major with the jægers."

"Indeed!" Miller cried joyously. "That's what I like to hear. Won't we give it to the red breeches now!"

"We'll do our duty at all events. But please excuse me now, as I have pressing duties. Good night to you and pleasant dreams."

"That's a trump of a captain," said Schultze, as they walked towards their camp ground.

"Yes, and a trump of a prince. By George! many a member of our shoddy-aristocracy might learn simplicity of him."

"So they might; but here's the camp. I wonder how the boys will receive the news? If they get jealous, I would rather remain private."

"I would at all events; but then I saw no way of escaping the irksome honor. As to the boys, they'll exonerate us, when they learn the truth."

"Then they shall learn the truth at once," said Schultze.

So when they had resumed their seats, Schultze requested a minute's silence and informed his comrades that they had been made officers against their will.

"We didn't want to accept," he said; "but you see a fellow cannot snub a Crown-Prince like a shoe-black, and so we drew in sail. Still if there is any one amongst you who thinks this elevation unfair——"

"*Elevation*!" he was interrnpted by one of the men. "Colonel Schultze of Uncle Sam's Moors has been degraded to a first lieutenancy and yet he talks about elevation. Hurrah for Gen. Millerand Col. Schultze!"

"Hurrah! hurrah!" the company cried with shouts of laughter and so the matter was settled, and on the next morning the two officers entered upon the duties of their new position with an assurance and efficiency which showed that their high rank in Uncle Sam's colored militia had not spoiled them for their lower sphere.

The fifth of August was spent in preparations for another conflict on a grander scale. The Uhlans had been out and brought the news that the corps of Canrobert and Failly had reinforced McMahon's army, and that the marshal had taken his position on the heights behind the town of Wœrth, a fearfully strong position. To learn this and to resolve upon an assault was the work of the same moment. Yet the execution of the design was by no means easy. The fifth of August was a rainy day, followed by a night still more rainy. The rapid advance of the troops had made it impossible for the provision-trains to keep up, and as the country had already been drained by the badly-supplied French, many a German soldier went hungry into one of the bloodiest battles on record, after having passed a sleepless night in miserable bivouacs. So in this respect no army had much of an advantage over the other, and in regard to numbers the same thing may be asserted. Including the shattered ranks of General Douai, who had found his death on the Gaisberg, the French army numbered about 72,000, while the German counted in all 150,000. Of these, however, a large portion was not engaged, and taking into consideration the really fearful position which McMahon had taken, it may be safely asserted that the chances for the contending armies stood tolerably even. The distance from Sulz to Wœrth is about ten miles, and a portion of the morning was consumed by getting into position. After ten the first cannons began to play, and corps after corps was drawn into the obstinate and bloody struggle; but I have neither the heart nor the time to unfold before the reader a second bloody picture in detail. Let him be contented to receive the principal features of a combat which we cannot entirely ignore, if we desire to keep in sight the persons whose adventures we have made it our business to chronicle.

The town of Wœrth lies in a caldron, from which heights of lesser and greater steepness arise. The former are covered with

those vineyards and hop-gardens which we have already noticed at Weissenburg. The latter are mostly crowned with dense, luxuriant forests, which form natural strongholds for the French army. Westward of Wœrth runs the road to Froschweiler, the village we had occasion to visit before. It rises gradually toward the village, which lies on a high plateau, intersected with woods, The town of Wœrth lies on a little island formed by the confluence of the Sulze and Sauer; *wœrth* signifying nothing but *island.* It was a strong position, as the Prussians learned to their cost; for *two* assaults were beaten off, and only after the third did they succeed in holding the town. But the conflict was not over then. Wœrth was a Weissenburg on a grander scale. As, at the latter place, the Gaisberg had to be taken after the town, the Germans could not consider themselves victorious at Wœrth, as long as the French held the hills in its rear and the village of Froschweiler. They knew it, and the same courage, the same contempt of death. which had distinguished them at Weissenburg displayed itself in their assault on the French position at Wœrth. Wading the swollen waters of the two rivers, they climbed the steep banks to be mowed down in companies by the chassepot and mitrailleuse. But where one fell ten followed, and at last the heights were carried. Another victory had been won. The spoils were much greater than at Weissenburg. Immense wagon-trains, the baggage of the commander, the tents of two whole divisions; cannons, mitrailleuses and chassepots; standards and eagles; thousands of prisoners fell into the hands of the victors. The Bavarians had also secured their share of the laurels. On the plateau back of Froschweiler they executed a brilliant flank-attack, which had completed the defeat of the French. In it our jægers were engaged. Major Haller handled his bataillon with his wonted skill and coolness, and the newly-created lieutenants sustained the character they had won in the first conflict.

When the strife was over, the men saw a squadron of Wurtemberg dragoons thundering past them.

"Ha! if a person could just accompany them!" exclaimed Miller. "I havn't had a good steed under me for ever so long."

"If that were all, you could easily be accommodated. See! there are dozens of riderless horses galloping over the plain."

"Yes, and that sorrel especially. What a noble animal! See how he carries his head and tail! Watch! he is coming this way; he seeks his master. I wonder whether he could be caught. I'll try at all events."

With these words he hastened to intercept the course which the animal seemed to take. When it approached him, it stopped, neighed and shook its mane. Miller said a few assuring words, and boldly stepped up to it as if the capture was a mere matter of course. This answered the purpose, and a few minutes later he galloped towards his comrades with a skill and elegance that at once betrayed the master in the art of horsemanship.

"You are made for a horseman, lieutenant," Haller addressed him; "and if I do not recommend you for that branch, it is from sheer selfishness. However, if you want to exercise a little this afternoon, I have no objection. The Crown-Prince will like to hear some details of the pursuit, and I could send no better person for that purpose."

"Thank you, major. But what about Schultze? You know the story of Orestes and Pylades...."

"Ah, yes, I see. It takes a heavy horse, though, to carry him. Can he ride?"

"Better than I."

"That's saying much. But here comes my servant with the spare Holsteiner. It is the heaviest beast in the army, I believe, and if Pylades has to go I'll lend it to him."

"Thank you, major," cried Schultze, and no sooner had the groom come up, than he jumped into the saddle and declared himself ready for duty.

"Be off then," said Haller. "Return with the earliest reliable information you can get."

A moment afterwards the two horsemen galloped in the direction which the dragoons had taken. The latter were a good piece ahead; but the road seemed to describe a curve and when they reached a by-road branching off to the right, they wondered whether, by taking it, they would not cut off a considerable piece and catch up with the Wurtembergers. Having no time for deliberation, they chose the alternative, in keeping with their character, and boldly struck into the by-road, which at first ran with

the other like the segment of a circle, and seemed to verify their supposition. Their progress moreover was less impeded, for not only was the road less cut up and therefore better; but it was also freer from obstacles in the shape of dead horses, abandoned cannons, wagons etc. They congratulated themselves upon their selection, when all at once they rode into a valley where the main road turned to the left, while their own way began to betray a considerable inclination to the right. Now they began to doubt the wisdom of their choice; but as the ground between the roads was of a swampy nature, they had no choice but to retrace their steps or pursue their course. They chose the latter expedient so much the rather, as they imagined to discover frequent traces of travel on the road.

"A division of the beaten foe seems to have turned in somewhere about here," Miller remarked. "If we ride on, we may come up with them and capture a whole company. Wouldn't that be glory tho'! If we accomplished such a feat, we might yet end as General and Colonel."

"Or as prisoners of war," replied Schultze dryly. "If I see right —and my eye used to be considered pretty good—I see quite a number of sansculots running a piece ahead of us."

"Not *sansculots* then, Schultze; for these fellows surely wear pants. Don't you see their red breeches?"

"Well, *avecculots* then, if you prefer it. Pants or no pants, we'll either have to annex these fellows or let them annex us."

"Oh well, we can stand it a little yet, I think. They seem to have no horses, and if they have, we can easily escape them, as ours are fresh and theirs are jaded. Come, let us ride a little faster, to see what this amounts to. It will tickle the large family of the Millers and Schultzes to death, if we finish the war by ourselves."

"Miller!" Schultze solemnly exclaimed, "you can not entertain such murderous thoughts. If you tickle all the Millers and Schultzes to death, you kill more persons than King William and Emperor Louis together."

During these words they had quickened the gait of their horses and would certainly have soon gained a better view of the party before them, if the region had not begun to assume a more

wooded character, bushes and trees lining the road, or the latter intersecting little groves.

When nearing one of these groves, they all at once heard a piercing shrieck, which unmistakably emanated from a woman and that too from one in distress. But how could this be? Had the retreating foes been mean enough, to attack a countrywoman of theirs? It was hardly probable and yet the red breeches surely belonged to the French army, no branch of the German hosts wearing them. Perhaps they were zouaves, or—worse yet—turcos! The blood ran cold in the veins of the two, when they imagined a tender woman in the hands of such barbarians. They knew it would be foolhardy in them to attempt a charge on such overwhelming numbers; they knew, it might even be considered as at variance with their duty: but in spite of all that, they loosened their revolvers with a simultaneous grip, slackened their reins and spurred their horses to a furious gallop.

As the advance of the other party seemed to have ceased at the same time, this rapid gait soon brought them in sight of a spectacle, which spoke too plainly for itself, to require an explanation. A band of some fifty men—they seemed to be turcos—surrounded a covered carriage, whose inmates of course were invisible, but whose span of horses seemed to be a source of dispute amongst the men. There was no coachman on the box and altogether the spectacle was a riddle to the scouts. However, they had no time now,—if they had had the disposition—to draw back. Their onset was so vigorous, that they could not have checked it, before reaching the turcos. So they abstained from reining up at all and rode with a ringing huzza into the very midst of the crowd.

The effect was magic. The men scattered in all direction, as molten lead does, into which a stream of cold water has suddenly been directed. True, they had no arms; but even if this had been the case, the effect of the shock would hardly have been different. Afterwards the fugitives were perhaps guided by this deficiency, for they ran, every one of them, until they were completely out of sight. This was favorable to our assailauts, for while the little grove. in which they found themselves stationed, concealed their number, the surrounding region was not suffi-

ciently wooded, to hide the return of their pursuers. After convincing themselves of their temporary safety, they rode to the carriage-door, to ascertain the character and condition of its inmates.

What they saw, was well calculated to arouse their sympathy. They saw a young woman bending over another, who had evidently fainted in consequence of the rough, and probably unexpected encounter with the ruffians. To judge from the dress, the conscious lady was superior to the unconscious one, not only in character, but also in rank. She tried all accessible means, to arouse their companion from her swoon. She called her name, rubbed her temples, and held a smelling-bottle under her nose, without, however, receiving at first a sign of encouragement. This seemed to worry her considerably, for she looked up with a look exceedingly troubled and exclaimed anxiously:

"Jean!"

But no Jean replied. Jean probably had been the coachman, but as there was no dead body near the carriage, it is to be presumed, that he took himself to a safe distance from what he most likely considered a risky neighborhood. In looking out for Jean, the lady perhaps glanced over the figures of the two horsemen; but if this was the case, it was done unconsciously. If her nerves had resisted the severe attack, under which the servant had failed, it was nevertheless sufficiently severe, toimpair her vision or the capacity of her brain to receive the impression. She probably took them for members of the band, who had treated her so rudely; for instead of addressing them, she returned to the sick woman and renewed her efforts to resuscitate her.

But if the lady had not recognised the *men*, one of them at least seemed to know *her*, for he started at her sight and for several minutes became the prey of an unaccountable agitation. He looked at her with the most searching glances and appeared to feel considerably annoyed, that she busied herself exclusively with her servant and took no time, to pay attention to her surroundings. At length her efforts were crowned with success; for the patient began to breathe and after a while opened her eyes, ank gazed about. She could not see the horsemen from her place; but the remembrance of the late adventure appeared to

affect her sufficiently to make a relapse into her swoon very imminent. Her companion tried therefore to persuade her with soothing words, that there was no further cause for fear and that they would resume their journey, as soon as Jean would make his appearance.

The assurances were interrupted by a thousand exclamations of the woman, one more silly than the other.

"Oh Mademoiselle Pauline, the holy Virgin save us! We are lost! We are lost!"

"Oh, come to your senses, Jeanette! You talk at random. Why should we be lost?"

"Why? Oh Holy Virgin! hear her talk! The Prussians! the Prussians!"

"The Prussians?" the young lady asked in amazement. "What in the world puts the Prussians in your head?"

"Oh! Mademoiselle Pauline! did you not see them? The men with red pantaloons and black faces."

"Why, silly girl, they were turcos. They have evidently left us to ourselves; so if you'll move a little I shall get out and look for Jean, for it is time that we should resume our journey."

"Oh do not go, Mademoiselle! For heaven's sake do not leave me. They were Prussians; for they have entered into a compact with the evil one and can assume whatever form they please; simply to ensnare us, and eat us alive, when they have us in their clutches."

"Why Jeanette, what silly prattle! You surely do not believe what you assert."

"Not believe it? and why then please should our worthy parson have told us? If I cannot believe a clergyman, whom should I trust?"

"And yonr clergyman has actually told you such stuff?"

"He has, Madam, and you will find that he is right. They have eaten my poor brother no doubt, and they'll soon be here again to receive us. There! Listen! Dont you hear that noise? Oh Holy Virgin, deliver us, deliver us!"

She had risen during these words and noticed the two horsemen, who had had remained mute, but attentive spectators of the scene. Miss Pauline—as the servant called her—involuntarily

followed the other's glance, and was in truth considerably startled in perceiving *now*, what she would have perceived a good while ago, if her mind had been in its normal condition. She uttered a low cry of surprise, and with wide-open eyes stared at the strange apparition.

On meeting this gaze, one of them—Miller—started again, but seemed now to settle a doubt which had preyed on him before. A ray of pleasure beamed from his eyes, and greeting the lady with a respectful military salute, said in fluent French:

"Fear nothing, Miss Delmont, you are in good hands. We were just in time to prevent those dusky rascals from making away with your horses."

The lady started.

"You know me?" she inquired wonderingly. "You speak French like a native. Are you not Germans, then?"

"We have that honor, as you can see from our uniforms."

"Then I am indebted to my foes for assistance against my friends?"

"May God always protect you from such friends."

"The service you rendered me forbids me to add: *and from such enemies.* But you have failed to explain how you learned my name; will you not have the kindness to set me on terms of equality and enable me to remember the names of such generous foes."

"And so you do not recognize me, Miss Delmont? Then the dust of battle must surely have covered my face with an impenetrable layer."

The lady started. She cast a scrutinizing glance at the speaker and all at once a ray of recognition lit up her countenance. She colored, and the expression of her face was decidedly joyous.

"Ah! now I know!" she exclaimed. "You are Monsieur——"

"Miller," he interrupted her with a bow. "Lieutenant with the Bavarian jægers."

At these words the joyous expression faded from her face, making room for one of the opposite character. Her voice sounded cold and distant, as she replied:

"You are p'aying a new role then. I have seen you in so many,

that I cannot doubt your eminent talent for acting, *Monsieur Miller.*"

The last word was spoken with a cutting emphasis, intended and evidently received as a rebuke.

"Judge not, lest ye be judged", he replied gravely, "I admit that you have reason to attribute to me the qualities of the chameleon; but if you will listen to my explanations——"

"I have neither the right nor the time to receive them," she broke in. "I am under recent obligations to you, or I might have added *disposition.* Allow me to express my sincere thanks for your interference and the hope that you will not suffer yourself to be detained on my account. Here is my coachman, I see, and with his assistance I shall fare admirably."

"As you please Madam," Miller replied, chilling himself at her icy politeness "we are not in the habit of forcing our company upon unwilling people."

"The presence of your armies tells a different story," she could not refrain from retorting.

"We simply return an intended compliment. But excuse me, Madam; I for one am opposed to warring on the weaker sex. Good day and a pleasant journey."

Another polite bow—then he put spurs to his charger and galloped away, closely followed by his companion. If he had designed to look behind, he would have had the satisfaction to see that the lady in the carriage leaned out of the door and looked after their receding forms with a look in which affection and the vexation recently evinced were strangely blended.

CHAPTER IX.

The reader knows with what marvelous rapidity the Germans pushed this campaign. The Crown-Prince was not slow to follow up the victory of Wœrth. That same evening the vanguard encamped at Niederbronn. We see our jægers snugly quartered in the houses of the village, dispatching their supper, singing, joking, debating as usual. Miller, however, did not join in the con-

versation of his fellow officers. He was uncommonly taciturn, and instead of seeking the company of his comrades, retired to a spot, where he could be alone and indulge in his reflections. He was not missed by anybody but Schultze, who, either from habit or strong affection, seemed incapable of enjoying himself in the absence of his friend. So he started on a search, and soon had the satisfaction of discovering Miller on a garden bench behind the house, gazing into the moon, and blowing dense clouds of smoke from his cigar. He sat down by the side of the dreamer and said:

"Miller, what is the matter?"

"Nothing special: why do you ask?"

"Because you are so taciturn against your habit. You haven't said a dozen words since our adventure on the road. To tell the truth, the meeting with that lady is the cause of your change."

Miller started and was on the point of protesting, when Schultze stopped him and said:

"Don't try to blind me, Robert; it is no use. I know you too well, not to understand your symptoms, and you ought to be ashamed to attempt dodging an old friend. There is something the matter with that girl in the carriage."

Miller remained silent.

"I don't speak French as fluently as you," Schultze continued; "but I understood enough of your conversation to know that you had met before. Speak out; unburden yourself; or, if you don't want to do that, stop at least this moping. It isn't idle curiosity that prompts my question, and you ought to know it. I am so used to your cheering merriment, that this moping fit makes me uncomfortable. Take your choice then: either make me the companion of your trouble, or hold up your head and show yourself the gay fellow that used to spread merriment around him."

This was the longest speech Miller had ever heard his friend make. His solicitude evidently moved him; for he gave his hand a warm pressure and said:

"I know it, August; I know it well. Nor was it want of confidence, which kept me from pouring my troubles into your ear. I hated to draw you into the vortex of unpleasant memories,

which, as you perceiv e, have given birth to thoughts of rather a gloomy nature."

"Then I was right; I knew I was. Still, I would not have thought that *you* would suffer yourself to be troubled with the recollection of a *girl*."

"Well, August, *you* used the expression and I adopted it. Trouble is rather too serious for my state of mind."

"Then chase these gloomy thoughts away."

"That I am unable to do."

"Well, then you have only the alternative of making me a confident. I am not to be shaken off, Mr. Miller, depend upon it."

The other thought a moment; then he replied:

"Very well, let it be as you wish. I have known you now for two years, shared joy and sorrow with you, and found you invariably a true, noble, sympathetic fellow. I do not see, why I should not enlighten you on some events of my life, which I keep concealed from others. But light a cigar first; a person can talk and listen so much better, when the fragrant smoke flies around his nose."

Schultze accepted; he lit a cigar and Miller resumed:

"You know I am a Bavarian by birth—with that you must rest satisfied for the present; for I have made a solemn vow not to use or reveal my real name until I have washed off in French blood several stains, which (I regret to say) folly and dissipation have left on my record. Suffice it to say, what you may have guessed already, that my name is not Miller."

"As little as mine is Schultze. I, too, withhold my name from similar motives."

"I thought as much; but this shall not affect our friendship. Let us each conceal what we cannot consistently divulge, until we have established a new and honorable record in this war. Let's have your hand on that, old fellow."

Schultze received and returned the hearty grip of his friend, who continued:

"My father lives in easy circumstances, and from my early youth supplied me with more money than was perhaps good for my welfare. I was his pet because I always brought him favorable reports from my teachers regarding my progress. Unfortu-

nately however, my deportment was not in keeping with my advancement, and if I enjoyed the reputation of the aptest scholar in my class, I coupled it with that of being also the most reckless and mischievous one. I was the instigator of nearly all the practical jokes of the school, and those, of which I was innocent, were nevertheless sure to be laid to my charge, because my character for mischief was so well established. As I grew older, my scene of action widened, and at last some of my achievements assumed so alarming a character that they could not help reaching my father's ear, thus gaining me a severe lecture with the strict order to abstain at once from such disgraceful conduct. However, I had too long been indulged to become all at once a strictly dutiful son, and so I continued my mischievous practices, taking merely greater care to prevent discovery and conviction. It is doubtful, how long I could have successfully carried on this conduct, if a variance with my father's political creed had not on a sudden produced an estrangement, and paved the way to a complete rupture. My father belonged to the particularists, while I on the other hand embraced with enthusiasm the principles of Young Germany, and advocated the union of all the German tribes into one great and glorious empire. To these principles I still adhere, and in them you must find the cause of my participation in this struggle; but if I maintain the correctness of my views, I am far from asserting that I conducted myself in those days with that modesty which became my age, or that respect which every child owes his parents. On the contrary, I am ready to concede that I erred in this and many other things, and that my conduct led me into irregularities—not to use a harsher term—of which I am heartily ashamed, and to undo which, I would gladly sacrifize a number of the years meted out to me. But it is useless to lament over past errors, and you will pardon me for slipping over these matters as rapidly as possible. Suffice it to say that the relation between my father and myself became daily colder, and that I finally threw off what I considered an intolerable constraint, when the arrival of my majority put me into possession of a legacy which I considered sufficient to allow me an unrestricted pursuit of my inclinations. A rebuke more than usually severe, ripened my resolution of leaving the parental roof,

and I departed without saying farewell, or communicating my intentions. The Exhibition at Paris at that time drew the universal attention to that city, and I only followed the example of thousands, when I bought bills of exchange on Parisian bankers, and took the express-train for Europe's gayest capital. The usual attractions of Paris were heightened by the exhibition, and before long I had plunged into a whirlpool of pleasures which soon exhausted my purse, without indemnifying me for the satisfaction to be derived from the pursuit of higher and nobler aims. To do myself justice, I failed from the start to appreciate these senseless debaucheries in which so many youths of Paris lose their lives. I participated in them as much for the sake of stifling unpleasant memories as for anything else. Nor can I say, how their compulsory abandonment would have affected me, for just on the eve of my impoverishment I became entangled in political combinations, whose discovery drove me from France. Not that I had really entertained any very blood-thirsty intentions against the emperor or his government; but it was fashionable at that time to conspire, and I was doubly loth to pass for unfashionable in this respect, as my reserve might have been construed by my boon-companions as a lack of courage. But if our plots were not very dangerous the government considered them so, or pretended to at least, and this circumstance made our pastime much more hazardous than we would have wished. We had our places of rendez-vous, our watch-words and signals, and as we met much more frequently than the matter really required, we could not help exciting the suspicion of one of the detectives, who from that moment tracked all our steps with that dogged tenacity for which the tribe is noted.

"I shall never forget the night which betrayed to us his real character, and shaped both his destiny and ours. Most of the conspirators were scions of noble houses, and had as such access to the best society of Paris. As their companion I too was everywhere received with open arms, especially, where daughters were to be provided with husbands. I spoke French with the fluency of a Parisian, was tolerably good-looking, passed for educated and was reputed to be a millionaire: what wonder then,

that I met everywhere with a reception much more in keeping with my pretensions than with my merits?

"On the memorable evening alluded to, we were invited to a masquerade given by a Russian princess to the elite of Paris. To be absent wonld have been considered equal to the admission that *we* did not belong to this elite, and so we resolved to make our appearance, although we had previously agreed upon a political meeting which could not well be postponed to another day, and was therefore announced to take place three hours later than originally intended. After agreing upon a badge, by means of which we could recognize one another, we parted to make the necessary toilet. I had no desire to attract attention, and therefore chose a plain domino, an attire which I shared with many others. I made the round of the brilliant "salons," and was at last attracted by the graceful motions with which the younger guests flew thro' the mazes of the dance in one of the larger apartments. How long this attraction would have chained me to the spot, I do not know; for all at once a circumstance occurred which changed me from a mere spectator into s mething of a participator. One of the ladies, a tall, graceful figure, lost a wreath, just as she flew by me, and half-a-dozen gentlemen at once hastened to pick it up. It rolled to my very feet, and common politeness required that I should join in the general effort of securing it. Having the advantage of position, I seized the prize. When the dance was over I stepped up to the owner of the wreath, and said:

" 'Excuse me, madam, for assisting these poor flowers to regain their enviable position.'

"The lady laughed.

" 'Well said,' she replied. 'I see you want to put both me and my flowers under obligations.'

" 'I should indeed like nothing better. Have the goodness to instruct me regarding the means.'

" 'Ah, you desire to be instructed! You see then that flattery has but little prospect of success.'

" 'I did not flatter, madam; I *never* flatter.'

" 'You complimented me on the strength of an accident.'

" 'This accident alone ga e me the courage to approach you.'

" 'Then we have both reason to feel grateful for this accident.'

" 'Madam makes me happy by this admission,' I said warmly.

" 'How so?' she replied, starting up. 'Ah! now I see,' she continued. 'You make bold constructions for one so very timid.'

" 'Your kindness gives me courage.'

" 'I would warn you not to presume.'

" 'If I did, I am ready to do penance.''

" 'That's right. I like a spirit of contrition. To test your earnestness, I shall beg you to conduct me to my seat. My cavalier servant has deserted me, it seems: evidence, how little the male sex can be relied upon.'

"Before I knew it, her arm rested on mine, and I escorted her to one of the smaller rooms. There was a vacant seat next to the one she selected, and without waiting for an invitation I sat down by her side and continued a conversation which had begun in so spicy a manner. I had always admired wit and spirit in women; but never before had I yielded so willingly to their charm. It is needless to worry you with a detailed account of everything that passed between us. Suffice it to say, that I was completely captivated by the keen wit, the intelligence, the sweet voice of my masked companion. I will not undertake to decide, whether these qualities would have made the same impression under ordinary circumstances. I am even ready to admit, that the place, the occasion and my ignorance of her looks had much to do with my infatuation. However this may be, I know that I experienced in her company a delightful sensation new to me, and that my growing desire to see her countenance finally induced me to lend words to this desire. The lady burst into a merry laugh at my request and shook her head.

" 'Your petition is hardly fair,' she said.

" 'Why not?' I responded. 'Of course, I mean to unmask as well as you. Indeed I shall at once set you a good example.'

"I was on the point of suiting the action to my words, when she stopped me.

" 'It is unnecessary,' she replied, laughing all the while. 'You need not take off your mask to acquaint me with your individuality. I know your name and face already.'

" 'You do?' I replied with considerable surprise. 'Pray, how

can this be? No one but a few intimate friends were aware of my intention to appear here to-night.'

" 'And yet I know you well. There is something peculiar in your step and bearing which enabled me to penetrate your disguise. Do you think, I would have accepted your attendance, if I had not been aware of your chara ter?'

"I thanked her for the compliment, and asked in turn whether I had seen her before.

" 'Not only seen,' she replied. 'You have even talked to me. I perceive that mystery lends me a charm which would vanish with the mystery. How then can you in fairness ask me to be the destroyer of my charms or rather your infatuation?'

"Her resistance however increased my desire to gaze upon the countenance of a woman who had made so deep an impression upon a mind not very impressible. I begged and coaxed and pleaded, until I finally carried the point, and was permitted to gaze upon a face whose beauty I need not extol, since you had this very day the privilege of beholding it yourself."

"Ah! I comprehend," said Schultze. "The lady in the coach—"

"Was my partner on that memorable night. I had indeed seen and spoken with her before, without receiving any remarkable impression; but that was *my* fault, not *hers*, and when she twitted me about it, I acknowledged my shortsightedness and asked her permission to cultivate her acquaintance and atone by future devotion for past indifference. This permission was graciously bestowed, and before the expiration of an hour we chatted and laughed together, as if we had known each other for years. But I was not the only suitor for her favor; every few minutes some gentlemen or other made his appearance to lead her into the entangled mazes of the dance. To get rid of them, I myself claimed her hand in the whirling round of the ball-room, and the very amusement at which I had formerly sneered as imbecile and puerile, became enchanting at her side. Let me pass rapidly over the happy hours of that evening; *hours* whose unalloyed bliss all the later vicissitudes of my life have been unable to efface from my memory. When I was at the height of my enjoyment, a hand suddenly touched my shoulder and a voice whispered in my ear:

"Remember!" It was one of the conspirators who thus all at once awakened me to reality and, what he considered, duty. As he remained by my side and seemed determined to enforce my company, I was compelled to say farewell to Miss Delmont. Before leaving, however, I begged and received permission to call on her next morning to pay my respects. Little did I dream at that moment that that visit should never be paid, and that years would elapse before my eyes again beheld her."

"If I am not mistaken, she blamed you for your want of punctuality?" suggested Schultze.

"You understood her right; but if you will listen a few minutes, you will perceive, how little I was to blame for this want of punctuality. After leaving her I followed my friend in rather a surly humor. He endeavored to open a conversation; but when he perceived that I answered either in monosyllables or not at all, he shrugged his shoulders and led the way to our rendezvous in c mpl te silence. We were in the habit of meeting in the back-room of a well-frequented restaurant; for we thought that the police would be less apt to suspect us in so public a place, than in another of greater secresy. It was late, and as we were no longer expected, the gas has been turned down, so that merely a feeble light pervaded the room. We seated ourselves around a table and commenced to discuss our plans, taking it for granted that we were the only occupants of the room. During the discussion however some one produced a paper, to read which he increased one of the jets of gas to its usual brightness. No sooner was this done, than my gaze fell upon the figure of a man who crouched in a corner of the room with the evident intention of avoiding discovery. I touched my neighbor's shoulder and pointed in the direction, and as this drew the attention of the rest to the suspicious spot, the presence of the man became known to the whole company. There was a momentary suspension of speech as well as motion, a circumstance which evidently told the stranger that he was discovered; for he jumped up and endeavored to escape with the greatest dispatch possible. I was nearest the door, and as I felt convinced that our safety depended upon the success or failure of his attempt, I made a dash and slammed the door into thc lock, just as he prepared to make the final spring which would

have secured *his* safety and *our* ruin. No sooner saw he himself thus foiled, when he turned, and, with a mien of authority, exclaimed:

" 'Messieurs, in the name of the emperor, you are my prisoners!'

"For a moment this unexpected turn paralyzed our physical as well as mental powers; but no sooner had we recovered from the shock, when the boldest amongst us summoned the rest to punish such treachery, and silence for ever the spy who was on the point of thwarting all our designs and exposing us to the rigor of the law. This appeal had the proper effect. *He* or *we*! became the parole, and we advanced upon the intruder with weapons drawn and miens so determined, that he evidently became alarmed for his life. Raising his fingers to his mouth, he uttered a shrill whistle, which not only brought us to a momentary stop, but also attracted the attention of outsiders, for we heard the tramp of many feet shaking the floor of the front room.

" 'Quick, boys, quick!' cried our leader, at the same time dealing the stranger so heavy a blow with his slung shot that he dropped down without a sound. 'Each for himself now! take to your heels or Cayenne will be our lot.'

"With these words he opened the door; but rushing through we met—a living wall of policemen who were unmistakably bent upon our capture. Thus far conspiring had been a mere pastime to me; a source of amusement to fill my idle moments; but now it assumed a rather serious aspect. I knew that the government would pay mighty little attention to the motives which had led me into this fraternity; but would punish my offense with the utmost severity of the law. If I was not shot or guillotined, Cayenne would be my certain lot, and this consciousness filled me with the determination to escape from the hands of my foes or lose my life in the attempt. I drew my revolver and threw myself against our assailants with all the force of which I was capable. My companions followed my example, and soon the two parties were nothing but a confused mass of angry combatants. Pistol-shots were freely exchanged, and here and there a cry of pain betrayed the fact that they had not been fired at random. I for my part had thus far abstained from using my weapon. I had succeeded

in breaking the circle of our foes, and was hastening towards the door, when I suddenly felt a hand on my shoulder which tried to seize the collar of my coat, for the purpose of stopping my retreat. Thus threatened I had no choice. I turned and fired upon my pursuer with such effect, that he staggered back and allowed me to continue my flight without further molestation. I reached the street and then ran as I never had run before. It was no longer Cayenne now: if my shot should prove fatal, as I feared it would, the gallows were sure to claim me as their victim. At first I ran without a certain aim, merely wishing to put an assuring distance between myself and the police; but when this was accomplished, I turned my steps towards my lodgings for the purpose of preparing for further flight, for I knew full well that it would be impossible for me to remain in Paris. When I came within a square of the house, I noticed a certain commotion about the door which looked suspicious and induced me to approach it with caution. This was well, for on drawing nearer, I recognized the uniform of policemen who had probably overhauled my papers and lay now in wait for me, should their colleagues fail in accomplishing my arrest at another place. I withdrew as stealthily as I had approached and then stopped at a retired spot, to reflect on my situation. It was truly desperate. I was in my ball-costume, with hardly money enough to last a day or two. I had no pass, no over-coat, no baggage; in short nothing that might assist a suspicious individual in safely passing the frontier. In this dilemma I formed the desperate resolution of calling on the Prussian embassador with whom I was slightly acquainted. The Bavarian envoy was not in the city just then; but even if he had been, I should have hesitated to make him my confident, as, in that instance, my father would have learned of my whereabouts and doings. True, I had discarded his authority and disregarded his wishes; but yet I had no desire to add to his grief by making him a partner to my troubles.

"It was then about two hours after midnight. When I presented myself to the porter of the Prussian embassy, and stated my desire to see his Excellency, the man stared at me with open eyes and evidently considered me under the influence of wine.. However, when I repeated my request, stating that I *must* see his

master on business of the utmost importance, he took my card and conducted me to a servant who sat in the antichamber and seemed to find great difficulty in keepirg off sleep.

"When I informed him of the nature of my errand, he stared like the porter, but, on seeing my card, became more polite and informed me that his Excellency had not yet returned from a party, but was expected every minute. If I would take a seat, he would deliver my card and inform me of his master's decision.

"I now recollected that I had seen the embassador at the masquerade. Chafing at this vexing delay I acted on the servant's advice and spent a very restless hour, ere the minister returned. At length a carriage rolled before the door and a minute afterwards that dignitary ascended the stairs. The servant had hardly handed him my card, when I stepped up to him and begged him in a polite but urgent manner to grant me a short interview. I must have looked pale and excited, for the embassador started at my sight, and cast at me a glance which seemed to wonder and ask, what this strange freak could mean. However, he granted my request, and when we were alone in his study, I gave him a short but truthful account of my late adventure and of the desperate straight into which my folly had placed me. For folly it was. I saw it then: in truth, I had seen it from the beginning. My companions were not the men to upset a government and give the people a better one. The fashionableness of the thing; the fear to appear in the light of a coward; the absence finally of something better to do, had drawn me into the plot, and there I was, although I would have given much to be free from the complication. The embassador saw this too, from my crest-fallen mien, and it was for this reason perhaps, that he censured my attempt in so lenient a manner.

" 'Why don't you go to your own minister?' he at last inquired after some preliminary remarks.

"I told him the reason, and he shook his head.

" 'I would rather have nothing to do with this affair,' he continued 'for, if discovered, it may lead to complications with our Court. Still, there is more folly than malice in your offense, and I hate to forsake a country-man in a straight, whose only avenue

is apt to lead to the scaffold. But then, what can we do? I see nothing but obstacles, no matter in which direction I look.'

"He stopped and I too maintained a respectful silence. After a pause of fully ten minutes he started up and said:

" 'I think, I have it—yes, that may do. You speak French readily, I believe?'

" 'With the fluency of a native.'

" 'Well, so much the better. Now listen to your instructions: You are my private secretary and go in my service to the Court of St. James. There is an English steamer at Havre, whose captain is under obligations to me, for a little service I was fortunate enough to render him. I received a note from him, in which he states, that he intends sailing for London this coming noon and asks, whether he can be of any service to me. I have already answered his letter in the negative; but if we dispatch a telegram for him without delay, to the effect that I mean to send a messenger by his boat, and beg him to await his arrival, my request will no doubt be complied with. Now, when does the next train start for Havre? Look in that paper, please. Five in the morning you say? Very well, that would do. Meanwhile, of course, you must remain with me and make all needful preparations. Fortunately only two of my servants have seen you, and they are both of them trusty, reliable men. And your effects are in the hands of the police? Well, well; then, I suppose, I'll have to fit you out myself. These fancy-clothes will never do. Leave them with me and don one of my suits. I am a little fleshier than you, but I have seen many a worse fit than that. Now the over-coat—no remonstrance, Sir! We can use our time to much better advantage.'

"In that way I was fully equipped for a journey. The good-natured minister insisted upon my accepting a little purse and a small trunk, because, as he expressed himself, no attache of a Prussian envoy would travel without either, and their absence might create suspicion. Thus persuaded, I yielded the point and concealed myself in my benefactor's bedroom, while he himself dispatched the before-mentioned telegram and ordered the carriage to take me to the station at the appointed time. I parted from him with tears in my eyes; but he would not listen to any

professions of gratitude, so that nothing but my looks and the fervent pressure of my hand were suffered to betray my feelings. Indeed, if he had not lent me his generous assistance, I should hardly sit here to-night to tell you my story. You may well imagine that the depot was closely guarded, and that an unknown and suspicious-looking stranger would have been arrested on the spot; but, cunning as the policemen of Paris are, it never entered their heads, that an attache of the Prussian embassy and the daring conspirator could be the same person. The servants too made a little more show than necessary. They exposed their livery as much as possible; they secured my ticket; they checked my trunk on which my new title could be read in glaring letters, and they finally accompanied me to a first-class coupe with much more servility than they would otherwise have shown. The policemen stood by and saluted; the engine whistled, and soon the train bore me away from a place which had suddenly become so dangerous for me.

"The distance from Paris to Havre is not considerable. At noon the train halted at the depot of the latter place, and when I walked to the baggage-room to claim my trunk, I was accosted by an Englishman who introduced himself as the captain of my steamer, and begged me to make use of a carriage which he had engaged, in order to quicken our departure as much as possible. This suited my purpose; I left the platform and entered the carriage; but as I turned back to watch the motions of my friend, the captain, my look was attracted by the face of a man who stood on the platform, and was engaged in an eager conversation with a policeman. I had certainly seen that face before—although I cannot to the present day recollect where—and, what was worse, the man had seen *me*, probably recognized me. The expression of his face changed; the words of the officer to which he had at first listened with indifference, seemed all at once to gain considerable interest, and a choking sensation about my heart told me that I believed myself betrayed and pursued.

"Meanwhile the captain had entered the carriage and ordered the driver to proceed. On looking through the small window in the back of the carriage I again saw the stranger, this time pointing to the vehicle as the cause of his excitement. I surely was

discovered; more than that, I would be lost, unless a higher power interposed miraculously in my behalf. At all events, it would not answer to leave the captain in ignorance concerning my situation. In his co-operation lay the only possible chance of escape.

" 'Captain,' I said hurriedly, seizing and pressing his arm. 'Could you possibly induce the driver to double the speed of our carriage?'

" 'I might,' he replied wonderingly; 'but why—'

" 'Don't ask *questions* now' I interrupted him. 'If ever you craved an opportunity of repaying your friend, the envoy, you have it now. I am pursued, and unless we make the sea, before my enemies have time to come up, my life is lost.'

"My companion evidently was the man for emergencies. Without asking another word of explanation, he raised the front-window and said to the driver :

" 'My friend, we are in a hurry. If you can take us to the quay in five minutes, you shall have twenty francs.'

"That was plain talk and the driver understood it. He whipped his horses and a moment afterwards we fairly flew over the pavement. I kept my eye to the little window in the rear, and it gave me some comfort, to perceive no sign of immediate pursuit. Yet I knew, that I would be pursued, and a heavy sigh of relief wrung itself from my breast, when we drew up on the quay and alighted. The captain ordered my trunk to be taken on board, and led me thither with the greatest dispatch. Fortunately, the preparations for an immediate departure were all completed, and when the captain gave his order to put off, nothing but a single cable had to be hauled in. At the same time the screw commenced its revolutions, and to my great relief the vessel began to obey the propelling force. Still the vis inertiæ of so great a body was difficult to overcome, and we swung off the quay with a slowness that made me nervous. I stood at the cabin-window and watched the receding shore, when all at once my eye was attracted by the rapid motion of a hack which stopped on the quay and discharged two passengers in whom I at once recognized the suspicious individuals of the depot. They had evidently lost my track; for their movements were those of men

who entertained doubts as to their best course. Perhaps they had merely taken the direction of the quay, because it was natural for them to conjecture that a fugitive would take to the sea. Their eyes wandered over the vessels in port and of course scanned our steamer, as she was in the act of leaving port. Still they seemed undecided as to their proper course, until all at once the stranger pointed at the steamer and talked so eagerly to the police-officer, that I felt sure he argued the propriety of boarding the vessel and reclaimihg me. I started back in consternation, forgetting at the moment that the darkness of the cabin would prevent them from seeing me. As I learned afterwards it was not I that had attracted their attention, but my trunk which in the hurry had been left on deck and betrayed my presence. At this moment the captain stepped into the cabin, rubbing his hands and preparing to congratulate me upon my seeming safety. I stopped him short, and, seizing his arm, drew him to the window, where he could see my two enemies in the act of stepping into a boat with the unmistakable intention of boarding our vessel. The captain muttered a curse between his lips.

"'Hang these parlez-vous!' he exclaimed. 'They are as keen on the track of a fellow as the boodhound on that of his prey. But we shall foil them yet. They are mistaken, if they think that they can board an English vessel, and take therefrom a person who is under the protection of the British flag generally, and that of Captain Endsley particularly. Give me the key of your trunk, and then come to my cabin. Quick! I must lock you up for a little while, and then attend to these busy-bodies. We'll see whether an English tar isn't a match for a pair of French detectives any day.'

"After this he hurried me to his own cabin and locked me up in a kind of a closet, the door of which opened with a spring and could in no wise be distinguished from the other panels of the room. It was totally dark, but seemed to receive a supply of fresh air from some hidden source; for I was in no way annoyed by that feeling of closeness, which soon oppresses a person, when confined in a narrow space. I felt around to make myself familiar with the locality, and hardly had I accomplished this, when voices in the cabin informed me of the arrival of my pursuers.

The partition was but thin, and I could hear distinctly what was said. The captain inquired after the wishes of his visitors who hastened to explain the nature of their errand, and demand the surrender of a criminal who was guilty of high treason and murder, and had taken refuge on board the vessel. I trembled, when I heard these grave charges, for I feared that they might influence the captain and induce him to comply with their demands. His voice, however, reassured me. He feigned the greatest surprise at their communication and said:

" 'Ah, now I understand! The man you seek started with me from the depot, but he is not on board.'

" 'Not on board?' one of the strangers exclaimed in surprise 'What in the world has then become of him?'

" 'That I cannot tell,' resumed the captain 'but what I know is this: This morning I received a dispatch from Paris, stating that a passenger for my steamer would reach Havre about noon, and requesting me to have a carriage ready to receive him. As the telegram pretended to come from a friend of mine, I complied with the request and really met with a stranger who had my address and introduced himself as the passenger in question. Of course, I thought it all right and conducted him to the carriage which we both entered, ordering the driver to take us to the quay. All at once however my companion began to evince a strange restlessness. He looked every now and then through the window in the back of the carriage, and finally begged me to hurry the driver to greater speed. I told him that we had plenty of time; but this did not satisfy him, for all at once he opened the door, jumped out, and ran into a side-street with a hurry which not only prevented me from stopping him, but caused me to entertain serious doubts as to his soundness of mind. I was sorely vexed, gentlemen, and you won't wonder at this, when I tell you that I had delayed my departure several hours on account of this very fellow Still, I am not the man to press a person into my vessel and therefore ordered the driver to proceed, sending at the same time a few curses after the crazy chap for the sake of easing my mind. So you see, gentlemen, that I am incapable of complying with your request.'

" 'Why, this is queer,' I heard the second stranger exclaim.

'We met your driver as he returned from the harbor, and he told us that he had landed two passengers on the quay.'

" 'Then the chap must have been drunk and seen double.'

" 'We saw no symptoms of intoxication.'

" 'Perhaps you didn't,' retorted the captain, beginning to betray signs of annoyance in his voice. 'You are at liberty to credit me or the driver, just as you please; but as to me, I have no time to bandy words with you. My vessel claims my attention and with your kind permission, I shall leave you to yourselves. You are at liberty to search my vessel, and if you can find your man, I shall of course be the last person to oppose his arrest. Good morning gentlemen.'

"I thought I discovered a touch of sarcasm in his voice which, of course, could not fail to anger the strangers. They tried to stop the captain by claiming that it was his duty to assist and facilitate their search; but this insinuation he proudly repelled, telling them that he was no French detective, and that strict neutrality was the best they could expect from him. Still, they continued to clamor, asserting that the fugitive must be on board the vessel, since they had seen his baggage on deck.

" 'What baggage do you mean?' the captain inquired with feigned surprise.

" 'The trunk you took with you from the depot.'

" '*That trunk*?' the captain exclaimed with well-feigned indignation. 'Well now, gentlemen, you had better pause to think, before you go any further in this ticklish affair. That trunk belongs to an attache of the Prussian embassy, now on his way to London. He left in too much of a hurry to think of his baggage, and the minister, who honors me with his friendship, sent the trunk to me to deliver it to the owner on my arrival in London Here is the key. Your worships are at liberty to examine the contents of the trunk, and convince yourselves of the correctness of my statement.'

"Still the strangers were not satisfied.

" 'That may all be,' one of them replied; 'but the whole thing looks too suspicious to be dismissed on such superficial evidence. We must insist upon the return of this steamer to her moorings.'

"A new tremor crept over my body, for I knew that the vessel

was still in the port and under the guns of the forts which could soon and easily enforce the demand of the official, in case the matter was reported at head-quarters. I knew moreover that but few men would be willing to run such risks for a total stranger, and momentarily expected the word which would announce the captain's readiness to capitulate. Fortunately however that worthy was an exception from the rule, possessing in a high degree that genuine bull-dog-spirit of John Bull, which considers it a disgrace to yield to any foreign demand.

" 'Insist and go to hell!' he exclaimed, 'Please where is your authority for such arbitrary measures?'

"They could show no such authority, but volunteered to take the entire responsibility upon themselves. To this, however, the captain objected.

" 'Look 'a here, gents' he said with a taunting sneer. 'I yielded as much, as I have a mind to yield at all, depend upon it. Search this vessel to your heart's content. If you find your man, you are welcome to him. If not, why then you will oblige me by shifting your quarters, and that too without much loss of time, for if I am not mistaken the steamer is by this time well on her way.'

"The strangers uttered a cry of indignation.

" 'You will rue this conduct,' one of them exclaimed. 'If we are foiled in the exercise of our duty, we shall be sure to seek redress at a higher tribunal, and you will learn at your cost that the French Government cannot be thwarted with impunity in its own harbors.'

" 'Do your best, gentlemen, or rather your worst,' the captain replied with provoking calmness. 'If you have a government, I flatter myself with possessing one too, and when it comes to comparing the strength of the two, I am not so sure that you will win. But indeed, you must excuse me, for my presence is imperatively needed on deck.'

"I heard him leave the cabin, and no sooner were the Frenchmen alone, when the sounds of many "sacre!" "tonnere!" and other exclamations filled the air. Then they consulted a few moments, and coming to the conclusion that a search under the present circumstances would be a mere farce, they also left the

cabin to enter a solemn protest against what they called the captain's arbitrary conduct, and then to take their departure. On hearing their retreating footsteps I drew a deep breath of relief, and when, fifteen minutes later, the captain released me from my confinement, I grasped his hand and in a torrent of professions, acknowledged my deep indebtedness. To this he shook his head.

" 'You owe me nothing,' he said; 'for it isn't altogether on your account that I run this risk. I owe your friend, the embassador, a heavy debt of gratitude, and it gives me sincere satisfaction to do a turn for him. So, if you feel under any obligations, acknowledge them to him. But tell me what these fellows mean with their charges? Not that it is any of my business; but somehow I feel an interest in you on our friend's account, and should like to befriend you to the extent of my ability. So, if you have no particular reason for secrecy, confide in me and enable me to advise you properly.'

"Thus summoned I made a clean breast of my whole trouble and finally begged my new patron to tell me his opinion as to the course I had better pursue. He studied a while and said:

" 'It is an ugly scrape and no mistake. As to this political affair, why, it gives me little trouble, for our government surrenders no political offenders. But with the second charge the matter stands differently. If it should turn out correct that your bullet sent this prying cove to his last account, they might claim you on the charge of murder, and I wouldn't be over-confident as to the result. If I were in your place I would give them the slip as soon as possible, and go for a while to America or some other foreign country. Indeed, my friend, that's what I would do.'

"I thanked him for his advice, and asked him about the best mode of accomplishing that purpose.

" 'Oh, as to that,' he said; 'there will be little difficulty. The German steamers touch at Southampton twice a week, and you can therefore easily secure a berth.'

" 'But they might telegraph my case and the authorities might be on their guard,' I suggested.

"The captain nodded.

" 'That is a fact,' he said; 'but I tell you what we can do. Let

me see, this is Thursday, the very day the Bremen steamer leaves for New-York. She cannot well have been informed as to your case, and if we shift to the north-east, we can cross her course, and put you on board without creating suspicion.'

" 'But that would put you out of your own course,' I interposed.

" 'Well, supposing it does: where is the difference? I am not the man to do another a turn and then leave him in the midst of difficulties. I want to see you out of danger and if it costs me a week. Have you the means to pay for your passage?'

"To this I replied in the affirmative, and then, without the loss of another minute, the worthy captain began to carry out his plan. It is getting late, and I may as well finish my story by stating that luck favored the enterprise, and that I was speedily put on board the Bremen steamer, which carried me safely to the hospitable shores of the New World. The rest of my adventures is familiar to you, and now, since you know the cause of my momentary dejection, we may as well lay down and try to snatch a nap. Come, let us go in."

"One moment," said Schultze, who had listened with the greatest attention to his friend's narrative. "Confidence begets confidence, and I cannot think of retiring to rest before I too have made you the confident of the one dark page, which I would gladly tear from the book of my life. Sit down and receive my short confession."

His voice was gloomy and oppressed, and when Miller saw the painful working of his features, he replied:

"Nay, Schultze, you had better not tell me. I see it pains you, and I would rather hear nothing concerning your past, than cause you a momentary pang."

But Schultze shook his head.

"It pains me to tell; but it pains me still more to keep silent. No, no, I want a confident; a confident too, who will judge me with friendly indulgence, and not cast me off on account of a weakness, which was but of short duration and has been deeply repented."

Miller preserved a respectful silence and Schultze continued:

"You must be aware from my accent that I hail from the north.

I was born in Hanover, where my father, like yours, held a lucrative and responsible position. If *you* were lectured on your duty to southern institutions, I had the consciousness of the privilege of being a subject of the glorious Guelf-family early and late instilled into my mind. Unlike you, however, I was a ready learner, and when, in 1866, the struggle between Prussia and Austria broke out, I embraced the cause of the latter with an ardor and enthusiasm generally foreign to the northern mind. Entering the army as a volunteer I participated in the retreat from Hanover to Langensalza, and in the battle fought at the latter place. I could not help seeing the entire want of preparation and the deplorable deficiency of our troops; but the vexation at the condition of our own affairs was a mild feeling, when compared with the intense hatred with which I looked upon our foe. I fought with the greatest desperation, as indeed did the whole army; but, although we gained a momentary advantage, we had finally to yield to greater numbers and superior management. I need not tell you that we were surrounded, captured and sent home on condition of giving the pledge not to serve any more during the war. You may easily imagine my rage at this condition; for at that time I had not reached a stand-point sufficiently elevated to consider our apparent misfortune as a blessing in disguise."

"Well, at that I do not wonder," said Miller; "nor need you blame yourself so very much for your infatuation. In fighting well and obstinately you only did your duty, and as a member of the Bavarian army, I should have done the same under similar circumstances."

"Yes, but that is not what I grieve for," replied Schultze with a shake of his head. "Nobody could blame me for defending the cause of my state, although, with my present views, I might have taken a different course: what I mourn at, is my subsequent conduct. Instead of complying with the stipulations of our surrender, I listened to the insinuations of our exiled king, and escaping to France, joined the Hanoverian legion. By doing so, I committed a double crime: I broke my pledge of honor and joined the enemies of Germany. Do you still wonder, that I bury the past in the depths of my soul, and tremble to disclose

it to a friend whose esteem I value? Tell me now that you despise me, and I only reap the natural consequences of my conduct."

Miller was evidently moved by his friend's contrition. He took his hand and said:

"Fear nothing of the kind. Far as I am from approving or even excusing your mistake, I am the last person to condemn you. Where is the man so free from error, as to cast the stone at his brother? If you failed, it was from motives of mistaken duty. I too wandered from the path of honor and obligation without even such an excuse. Let us then bear with one another's failings, but at the same time form the resolution to atone for them by lending our hands and hearts to the common cause and march "*Through Blood and Iron*" to a new life and a nobler career!"

"Through Blood and Iron!" repeated Schultze pressing the hand of his friend. Then rising, the two withdrew from the garden and in silence sought that slumber which was to give them new strength for a new struggle.

CHAPTER X.

WHILE the army of the Crown-Prince was thus gathering lanrels, the troops under Steinmetz had not been idle. If anything, they had been too busy, for the removal of their veteran leader has generally been construed as a sign of royal displeasure at the recklessness, witn which the precious blood of Germany's best sons, was spilt at Spichern. It has been alleged, that it was the intention of Moltkc to play the game of Gravellotte and Rezonville much nearer the border and by the feigned timidity of the German center draw the enemy into a deadly coil. The impetuous advance of Steinmetz is said to have spoiled these speculations; but however this may be, it cannot be denied that, at the Spichern heights, the German soldiers performed miracles of bra-

very. The world will forever look with astonishment upon the bold attempt to storm a range of hills so steep that the natural impediments alone offer obstacles by no means contemptible. But these hills were covered with artillery of the most fearful character. They were literally covered with the the flower of the French army, and it seemed sheer madness to make the attempt of carrying them. Yet they were carried. The victory was gained at a fearful cost, but it was gained, and the world which is apt to judge a measure by its results, burst out into a great shout of applause.

The battle of Spichern drove the Frenchman from the frontier. It completed what the conflicts of Weissenburg and Wœrth had commenced, and changed the aggressive party into the defensive one. It crippled even the defense, for, unable to hold the line of the Vosges against the victorious Germans, the French fell back upon the line of the Moselle and the strong fortress of Metz. There the world expected them to stop; but it was disappointed in this, as in many other things connected with this war. The beaten army rested only long enough to take a breath and cast a bewildered glance upon the situation. How strangely had a single week changed the aspect of affairs! Was this demoralized crowd the proud army whose only watchword had been the cry: "On to Berlin!" ? Where was McMahon with his southern divisions? Was his army annihilated, or, if not, in what direction did it flee before the pursuing foe? No tidings of its movemcnts reached the ear of Bazaine, the French commander at Metz; but ominous rumors of the enemy's appearance came thick and fast. The dreaded Uhlans showed themselves in every direction, at every place, and wrapped the movements of the German hosts in a mist at once dangerous and annoying. In this mist Frederic William advanced upon Nancy, took the town and continued his march upon Paris, throwing his light cavalry far in advance of his columns. The northern army under Steinmetz, meanwhile, marched directly over St. Avold, Les Etangs and Le Chaussy against Metz, while the central and largest army pursued a parallel line on its left, heading for Pont-a-Mousson, where the cavalry made its appearance as early as the 12th of August.

The birth-day of Napoleon, the 15th, was now fast approach-

ing, and Bazaine, desirous of retrieving the sinking fortunes of his country, resolved to attack the Prussian vanguard on that very day. A victory, won under such circumstances, would not only shed lustre on himself, but revive the brilliancy of his master's waning star. He pushed a portion of his forces as far as Courcelles on the Nied, and would, no doubt, have executed his designs on the morning of the 15th, if Steinmetz had not spoiled his calculations the day before. Gathering his batallions, as they came up, he hurled them against the strong position of the French in the densely wooded park of Pange, and stormed line after line, until the Prussians stood under the very glacis of the fortress. In this desperate struggle the French had first been reinforced by Ladmirault's corps and afterwards by troops from almost every division; but not only did these measures prove to be in vain; they also retarded the retreat of the whole army to Verdun over twenty-four hours. The unengaged troops stood all the while west of Metz, and awaited the order to march; but this order did not reach them before the evening of the 15th and the morning of the 16th. When it came, the marshal had no idea of the importance of this delay, nor of the momentous movements of the enemy which began to develop themselves a day later and finally threw him and his army back into Metz, there to remain amidst constant fighting and innumerable hardships up to the day which saw them all unconditional prisoners in the hands of the Germans.

The French had advanced to the region of Mars-la-Tour, when they were suddenly and violently attacked by a few regiments of Prussian dragoons and cuirassiers. These troops formed the vanguard of the army of Frederic Charles, who had hurried in forced marches in a north-western direction with the bold intention of cutting off Bazaine's retreat to Verdun. The few light regiments were unsupported by infantry; yet they checked the advance of the French for three hours. The charges of these brave horsemen were truly terrific; but their own loss was in proportion to the injury inflicted. The French army which at first had marched on two routes, gradually concentrated around Mars-la-Tour, and poured a murderous fire upon their assailants. Missiles of every description decimated the ranks of the noble fel-

lows; but they never wavered, and held out until troops from Hanover, Schleswig-Holstein and other provinces arrived on the battle-field, and, by their timely succor, lent the conflict a somewhat less desperate character. True, the Germans remained even then in the minority; but so successful was their fierce onset upon the French that the Crown-Prince was enabled to telegraph to Berlin: "We drove the enemy into Metz after twelve hours' desperate fighting."

The battle had been a bloody one; but, considering the fruits of the victory, it had not been purchased too dear. The principal army of the French had been driven from its line of base by a German army greatly inferior in number. Still, while King William and his generals rejoiced at the achievement, they prepared for another and bloodier battle, for they knew full well that Bazaine was not the man to give up without a last and desperate effort to break the tightening coil of the German anaconda. Being aware of the moral force of the assailant, they resolved to anticipate the attempt of the French marshal and to beat his hosts so thoroughly in a new and decisive battle, that nothing but a retreat into the walls of Metz would save them from destruction. They pushed their columns to the north, to cut off the road to Thionville, and then, on the 18th of August, fought those memorable battles of Gravelotte, Rezonville, St. Marie, St. Privat which shall forever live in the annals of history. The different German tribes rivalled in deeds of valor, and the Saxons who had been the last on the theater of war and thus far escaped the trying ordeal of the battle-field, proved then and there beyond the shadow of a doubt, that, if the last, they were far from being the least in the noble league which had drawn the sword for the realization of their dreams and wishes: the achievement of German Unity.

The two armies were separated by a steep and narrow ravine, the French crest rising above the German one and thus facilitating the defense of their position. By this advantage they seemed determined to benefit, for on no other occasion in this war had they fought with the valor, the obstinacy,—yes, desperation, which they displayed at Gravelotte against a foe flushed with recent victories. The ground was disputed inch by inch, and for several

hours the Prussian leaders entertained grave doubts as to the issue of the conflict. Indeed few armies would have conquered under such desperate circumstances. Imagine the situation of the German army in case of defeat! Cut off from its base, its condition would have been far more deplorable than that of its opponent, and total annihilation its certain destiny. Nor could so bold a manœuvre have been undertaken with troops less thoroughly disciplined. With these men the individual will had disappeared to snbstitute the command of the leader. When he ordered them to assault a position they carried it or perished in the attempt; when he commanded them to hold one, they obeyed the injunction, dead or alive.

And yet even with such men the battle came near being lost. Night was approaching and the French batteries instead of receding before the Prussian cannon, seemed to draw nearer to the head-quarters of King William. Anxiously did he look into the face of every new adjutant, as he galloped up to the spot and brought tidings of the progress of the battle. Darkness began to sink upon the region, before the longed-for news of "reinforcements coming!" reached the ear of the listening monarch. Moltke caught the words and spurring his horse, galloped toward the reserves so ardently desired, to point out to them the position he wished them to occupy. It was the right wing of the French on which thus far the Prussians had been incapable of making an impression. But now the tide turned. The fresh reserves succeeded in reaching the opposite brow of the ravine. and, once there, no resistance on the part of the French was able to stem their progress. The army of Bazaine withdrew from every position which it had occupied in the morning, while the Germans in turn advanced their columns, exchanging an occasional cannon-shot as late as nine o'clock. After that time even these sounds died away and the French army stole back into the fortress with the mournful consciousness that their career was run, and that, if ever they were suffered to leave it, it would be merely to view and lament the suddenness and marvelous rapidity with which France had been hurled from a position proud and glorious; but not always honorable and just.

The greatest and bloodiest, the boldest and most stupendous

work which the records of war can exhibit had been achieved. The French army was cut off from all communication with the capital and the country; it was shut up in a small city with 57,000 inhabitants and reduced to the alternative of surrendering, of dying on the battlefield, or succumbing to starvation.

CHAPTER XI.

While Frederic Charles and Steinmetz thus dealt heavy blows to the tottering empire, the army of the Crown-Prince had not been idle. Advancing in a south-western direction it took the fortresses of Lichtenberg and Lutzelstein, invested those of Pfalzburgh and Marsal, occupied Luneville and, on the 14th of August, appeared before Nancy, which, unable to defend itself, immediately complied with the summons to surrender.

We hunt our friends, the American volunteers, and find them a couple of miles from Nancy, riding at the head of their company and indulging in a lively conversation. Their spirits seem to have revived from their recent depression, for their voices sound merry and a martial fire beams from their eye. No wonder! There is a certain something in war which stirs up the innermost depths of the human soul and which becomes doubly irresistible when glorious victories open the way into the heart of the hostile country.

The jægers share this spirit; they smoke, they chat, they sing and march with steps so bouyant, that one would think them bound for a gladsome frolic and not for the bloody conflict which the next hour may bring them.

The road on which they marched was one of those excellent chaussees which traverse France in every direction. Though broad and smooth, it was in this instance taxed to its utmost capacity. Not only did troops of all classes cover it for miles, but vehicles of every description dived up from this sea of human heads. There were the "chaise" or buggy of the reporter or contractor, the covered wagon of the suttler; the endless trains

belonging to the ambulance, the artillery, the telegraph, the commissariat. That this immense accumulation of heterogeneous elements caused frequent and protracted stoppings, can cause no surprise, and, indeed, we are called upon to record such a stoppage a few minutes after rejoining our friends. There was a perfect medley of wagons right in front of the company; in fact, two or three of them had become so wedged in and entangled, as to cause the delay mentioned. The soldiers stopped their conversation and listened with evident amusement to the vociferous demonstration with which some of the number hurled forth their accusations and others repelled the charges. At length these oral demonstrations treatened to assume so palpable a character that Miller thought proper to interfere. Riding up to the scene of confusion, he addressed the quarreling parties with that resolute tone of authority which generally commands attention. They turned to him and were on the point of inundating him with their explanations, when he stopped them short, saying:

"Never mind that now, for I have no time to listen. Let us rather see, where the trouble lies: This is your wagon, is it? Very well, Sir, why don't you back a little? Don't you see, that the wheels are locked?"

"I know, but then he had no bussiness to drive into my road."

"Perhaps he hadn't; but that is not the question now. Back at once, I tell you, or I shall be compelled to report you at headquarters."

The fellow grumbled, but thought best to comply with the injunction, and a few minutes later the jumble was unraveled and the train in motion. Miller was on the point of returning to his men, when a strange looking figure on one of the wagons attracted his attention and chained him to the spot. It was a middle-aged woman, sitting on a bundle of straw and attired in the queerest manner possible. Her dress was of heavy silk, but soiled all over and torn to such a degree, as to cause the shreds to hang down on all sides. She wore one of the hats which the fashion of the day dictated, ridiculously small, but overladen with feathers and spangles. The hat, like the dress, showed the richest and dearest material, but it had been knocked into so

many shapes by the ruthless hand of war that it gave the woman a rather ridiculous aspect.

In addition to this she wore ringlets which in truth had lost all claims to that name, and hung like so many whip-cords around a sharp-cut, distracted looking face. On her lap she held two pets, a crabbed poodle which barked and snarled at every-body and a cat of monstrous size, that evidently viewed matters with a suspicious eye and, by her curved back, betrayed her readiness to repel hostile invasions. The woman seemed to be ill at ease, for her sharp, shrill voice mingled with the barking of the dog, greatly to the amusement of the spectators who either grinned or laughed aloud, and by their bantering remarks in no wise increased the comfort of the woman.

"Go ahead steamboat!" cried a sturdy sutler in German. "You and your poodle manage the thing splendidly."

"'T is a fine concert, considerin' she don't charge anything," said another.

"Yes, but her fiddle squeals a little," joined in a third. "If I were in her case, I'd grease my bow."

At this moment Miller thought it proper to interfere.

"Shame on you, men!" he cried. "Can you do nothing better than tease a poor helpless woman? Don't mind them, madam, and tell me what you want."

"Mais je ne vous comprends pas, Monsieur: Ne parlez-vous pas Francais?"

"Why, yes, I do," said Miller dropping his German and replying in French. "I speak French and shall be happy to render you any assistance in my power."

"Oh thousand thanks, Monsieur," replied the woman, her countenance brightening considerably. "I am only too happy to benefit by your offer. I have been trying in vain to make these fellows understand that I want to alight. A short distance from here is my brother's house which I am anxious to reach; but without your assistance these barbarians would have carried me on, heaven knows how far. But will you tell the driver to stop, Monsieur? We are passing the place and I fear to lose sight of it."

Miller complied with her desire and soon the dame stood on

the ground, holding her pets in her arms. However, her step was tottering, and the glance she cast around so full of embarrassment and consternation that Miller felt pity and volunteered to act as her guide. He dismounted and giving his horse in charge of a soldier, conducted the woman from the chaussee to a country road, which, as she said, led to her brother's residence. She was profuse in her protestations of gratitude, and her expressions were so well chosen and her manners so polite, that Miller soon discovered her to be of higher birth than her tattered dress and helpless condition seemed to warrant. He could not abstain from asking her how she got into such a straight, and no sooner was the question uttered than she launched into a voluminous explanation.

"Ah, monsieur," she cried, "it was a horrible affair, I assure you. It must be a week now, when that dreadful battle began; or more than that, for all I know; you see these terrible things have slightly confused my mind. Our house was all in commotion. The marshal (we had the honor of entertaining the Duke of Malakoff) thc marshal, I say, mounted his horse and rode away, followed by his adjutants. My brother and nephew had left the day before, so that we women were all alone. True, at first, the usual sentinels guarded the house; but after a while, when the battle drew nearer, they disappeared and left us to onrselves. I was dreadfully afraid I assure you, and advised my niece to seek safety in the cellar; but she refused to listen and said she would order Jean to get the carriage ready and take us to a place of greater safety. So she went out, promising to return at once; but no sooner had she disappeared than a big bomb-shell struck the villa and exploded in the next chamber. I gave a loud scream and thought myself lost; but when, a few moments later, I found myself alive and unhurt, I ran with trembling steps to the cellar-door. There I stopped a minute and called my niece as loud as I could. Nobody answered, however, and when at that moment, a second shell struck the building, I hesitated no longer, but, descending the flight of stairs before me, sought the safer regions of the cellar-vaults. There I remained all day, wavering between the desire of learning the fate of my niece and the fear of being killed by one of the dreadful missiles which

struck the house every five minutes or so. Ah, monsieur! it was a dreadful day, I assure you."

"I do not doubt it, Madam. But you left the cellar in the evening, did you not?"

"No, monsieur, I remained there all night and also the following day. On descending I had shut the door after me, forgetting that the key was on the outside and that there was no other outlet from the cellar. Imagine my horror, when I found myself thus imprisoned, with the prospect of the vaults becoming my tomb. I pressed against the door with all my might; I cried for help with all my might; but voice and strength failed me after the first effort, and I swooned away, to remain in that condition, I do not know, how long, and to regain my consciousness only to find myself in utter darkness and a cold, moist atmosphere which chilled me to the bone."

"Poor woman!"

"Ah! monsieur, you may well pity me! I would sooner die, than pass another night like that. It was so dark that I feared to descend the stairs and hunt a better place to spend the night. Nor would such a step have benefited me much; for the vault was as damp and cold in one place, as in another, and as I lacked the necessary garments to keep myself warm, it mattered little, where the icy air shook my frail limbs. To heighten my horror, innumerable rats and mice selected the stairs and sometimes my person for their rendez-vous. At first I screamed, when I heard or felt one, for I had always entertained a great disgust for every kind of vermin, but gradually I became insensible even to this nauseous annoyance, sinking into an apathy from which only the returning light of day aroused me in a measure. As soon as I could see, I renewed my efforts to escape from my prison. Finding that the door could not be forced, I examined the whole cellar with the idle hope of discovering an outlet through which I might escape. True I found another door, a trap-door, which opened into one of the court-yards of the villa; but it was more securely locked than the other, a strong padlock guarding the entrance on the outside. Still, as this door was nearer the open air, and as my cries for help would be more apt to attract attention, I chose one of the steps as my head-quar-

ters, leaving it only on such errands, as hunger and other wants occasioned. Fortunately I found an abundance of wine and victuals in the cellar, a circumstance to which I owe my preservation in a double sense, for besides satisfying my appetite these supplies finally attracted the men, who broke my prison door. Not that my deliverance had given them much satisfaction: on the contrary, the men cursed me abundantly and seemed half inclined to finish with their hands the work, which exposure had commenced. They came with the evident intention of stealing the provisions of their former master, and now telerated with reluctance a person, who might bear witness against them on a future day of reckoning."

"That does not speak very highly for French servants."

"I am ill-prepared to advocate their cause. Of all the beings of the house and village who had once enjoyed our fostering care, a brute alone evinced symptoms of that attachment which I imagined to have gained by my deportment."

"A brute, you say, madam?"

"Yes, monsieur, a brute. Look at this dog. When I stepped upon the yard, Ponto, my poodle, alone betrayed his pleasure at seeing me by barking, jumping and wagging his tail."

Miller smiled.

"I am glad to see him capable of such redeeming sentiments," he said. "His feelings for the rest of mankind do not seem to be the very friendliest."

"Is it a wonder? Ponto is intelligent. He sees the fickleness of the human race, and hates it for his mistress' sake."

"Perhaps he does; but this cat, madam: is she also the happy owner of such exalted feelings?"

"Why, no, monsieur," the spinster replied somewhat hesitatingly. "I am sorry to say that I found this cat incapable of rising to Ponto's virtue. She resisted my attempt to remove her from the villa to the utmost of her power."

"And yet you insisted upon taking her?"

"I did, Monsieur. Are we not taught to disregard ingratitude in regulating our own course?"

"I admire your principles," said Miller, inwardly amused. "I wonder no longer at Ponto's sentiments, with such an example

constantly before his eyes; but I am doubly surprised at Pussy's shortcomings."

The old lady seemed somewhat at a loss how to take his words; for the side glance which she cast at him was rather suspicious. At this moment, however, the pair turned a corner and came in sight of a house which the lady declared to be her brother's residence. In consequence of this discovery, joy and gratitude drove every other thought from her mind, and made her clamorous in her desire of introducing her companion to her friends as one, who, though a Prussian, had assisted her in her trials. In vain did Miller protest and declare that duty called him to his company: she promised to detain him only a minute and then to release him with a promise to renew his visit at his leisure. Say what he would, he had to enter the premises and become an indifferent spectator of a family-reunion in which he expected to see the ludicrous exceed the pathetic.

He rang the bell at the request of the spinster, and awaited with commendable patience the result of the measure, when all at once the door was opened and a young lady made her appearance whose aspect changed Miller from an indifferent into an interested spectator. The young lady was evidently not prepared for the arrival of the spinster, for she looked at her with an inquiring glance which seemed to ask the question:

"Well madam, what is it? What can I do for you?"

The spinster, on the other hand, had no sooner discovered the girl, than she dropped both Ponto and Pussy, and, with outstretched arms hastened to embrace her.

"Pauline!" she cried. "Oh my dear Pauline! You are alive! you are safe! I hold you again in my arms! I am paid for all my troubles, indeed they are already forgotten!"

The young lady was at first like one stupified on seeing herself thus suddenly overwhelmed with caresses; but a second was sufficient to set her right and then she returned the spinster's embrace and said:

"Is it possible! Aunt Aspasia! So you were not killed in that dreadful battle, as I was forced to imagine to my great sorrow?"

"No, child, not quite, thanks to my excellent nerves. True, I went through trials, severe enough to kill a dozen common wo-

men. Still I came out alive, you see, thanks to my good constitution and the assistance of a few friends, whom Providence raised up for me amongst the enemies of our country. This gentlemen is one of them, Pauline. Allow me to introduce him to your favor. Your name, Monsieur ?"

But Monsieur did not hear. From the moment of the girls' first appearance, his eyes had not only been riveted upon her form, but his whole person had fallen prey to considerable excitement. And the girl? She had the disadvantage of noticing after being noticed, for to such a degree had the meeting with her aunt chained her attention, that she never turned to Miller, until the spinster made an attempt at introducing the two to one another. Then recognition flashed like lightning through her mind, and so much was she benefited by that tact which generally guides woman in emergencies that she recovered her self-control even before the officer. True, a burning red continued to cover her countenance, but her voice was quiet with only a slight touch of sarcasm, when she replied in his place:

"Monsieur Miller, lieutenant with the Bavarian jægers."

Miss Dupre— for as such we have reognized long ago—was greatly startled, and displayed her surprise in so undisguised a manner, that Pauline broke into a merry laugh. Miller also regained his composure and would have joined in the merriment, if the respect for the old lady had not prevented him.

"And you actually know this gentleman?" Mademoiselle Aspasia finally managed to utter.

"Well, so much the better: that facilitates my task Monsieur Lieutenant, allow me to introduce to you—"

"Miss Pauline Delmont, maid of honor to Her Majesty the Empress," interrupted Miller as gravely as he could.

This was too much for the spinster. She was so astounded at this sudden revelation that she overlooked the flight of Pussy who had made her escape through the open door, as well as Ponto's constant attempts upon Miller's calves, against which our friend could only defend himself by an occasional well-directed kick. The spinster looked at them in turn with such a comic despair that Miller took pity on her and said:

"Is it so marvelous, Madame, that your niece and I should

Foraging Uhlans.

know each other? Not that I claim this acquaintance. In fact, I have reason to imagine my presence very unacceptable to her, and would not have ventured upon this liberty, if she had not set me an example. I assure you that I was entirely unprepared to meet you here," he continued, turning to Miss Delmont; "or I might have been less quick to accept your aunt's invitation. Let me atone for my presumption by the immediate withdrawal of a person so obnoxious to you."

"As to you, madam," he continued, returning to Miss Dupre; "allow me to express my hope that this adventure will be without evil consequences both for you and your pets, and that an early peace will find you a happy trio, reaping the full reward of your virtues and your sufferings."

Perhaps he was unconscious of the irony contained in his words; but Pauline was not. She seemed to feel that vexation at her recent conduct had dictated his words; yet she remained silent until he raised his cap and, with a bow, prepared to leave the house. Then at last she stepped forward and said with a comical vexation which Miller thought very charming:

"So that is the way you want to crush us with the load of our obligations? I perceive you want to imitate the strategy of Monsieur Moltke; but what may be *great* in a *general*, need by no means be *amiable* in a *lieutenant*."

"Amiable," repeated Miller, half vexed, half amused. "I was not aware that I had laid any claims to amiability."

"So much the worse for you. It surely shows a great lack of that desirable quality to render so difficult the attempt of a silly young lady to atone for a past offence, an offence moreover which time and circumstances surely ought to extenuate."

"But I do not comprehend—" retorted Miller in great astonishment.

"Another proof of the correctness of my assertion. Would an amiable young man desire to comprehend, when a young lady finds such difficulty in explaining? Would he not rather attempt to forget the past and now receive a double portion of thanks for double services rendered?"

"Oh, well! if that is all that's necessary to establish my claim

to amiability, I shall at once be amiable in the highest degree imaginable."

"Ah! that sounds differently. Monsieur le lieutenant is not incorrigible. Will he please enter this room and take a seat? It would surely not be polite in us to keep Aunt Aspasia standing here, with both heart and knees trembling, the former with impatience to divulge her strange adventures, the latter with fatigue contracted in these very adventures. En avant! en avant!"

Miss Aspasia seemed to be very well pleased with this turn of affairs, and beckoning to Miller she said:

"We may as well obey, Sir; for she has always had her own way, and is not likely to suffer a disappointment this time. Entrous, monsieur, entrous!"

They entered the room, minus Ponto, who by this time had learned to understand the German which Miller had spoken with his boots. The haste of our worthy volunteer seemed to have greatly diminished; for when Aunt Aspasia invited him to sit down and then launched into a long-winded account of all the adventures through which she had passed, he betrayed no sign of impatience whatever. Perhaps we can account for this by the fact that his eyes looked upon the *niece*, while his ears listened to the *aunt*. Pauline, however, was much less patient. She made several attempts to interrupt the narrator, and at last merely gave it up because she despaired of success. Finally, when Aunt Aspasia had safely arrived at the mansion, the young lady managed to put in the question:

"And the others, Aunty: where are they?"

"The others?" the spinster retorted with great surprise. "They are not with you, then? I was wondering why they hesitated so long to meet me."

"No, Aunt, I am alone, and thought you would surely bring me some news concerning them. You know nothing of Uncle Hercules?"

"How should I? You forget that he left the day before the battle for his arrondissement."

"True enough, and so did Achilles."

"Yes, poor boy!" said Aspasia, with a sigh. "What may have become of him?"

"Oh, never mind Achilles!" said Pauline, somewhat disdainfully. "Depend upon it, Aunty, he will always manage to take care of Number One. No, if I fear for any one, it is for my brother Victor. Poor boy! his dreams of glory have been of very short duration."

"They may revive, Pauline; indeed I am sure they will."

"We must hope for the best, Aunty. At present, however, I would be satisfied to receive the assurance of his being alive and well. But I have a foreboding which tells me the contrary. Victor was so rash and daring: who knows but a hostile bullet has laid him low, and deprived us even of the knowledge of his burial-place and the comfort of praying at his grave."

Tears stood in the eyes of the girl, and Miller, fearing to impede by his presence the further exchange of confidential communications, arose to leave. The ladies once more assured him of their gratitude, and then exacted from him the promise of another visit, provided the troops remained sufficiently long in Nancy to allow such a digression.

When Schultze met his friend the first time after this encounter, he thought he discovered in his eyes the light of former days. When he inquired the cause, Miller put on a very mysterious air and said:

"Can you accompany me to-night on a visit to the suburbs?"

"A question for a question: is that fair? But supposing I said yes: what then?"

"Then I should answer: get ready, by all means; for in the suburbs I shall answer your inquiry."

CHAPTER XII.

NANCY is a beautiful town of about 50,000 inhabitants. It resembles Leipsic in its extension, its comfortable abundance, its rural suburbs and its numerous public buildings; but the construction of its houses, the flat roofs, the frequent appearance of

the walnut, the chestnut, the locust tree and grape-vine betray the more southern clime.

Nancy was formerly a German town like Metz and Strasburg; but its inhabitants showed themselves more hostile to their former countrymen and present conquerors, than the genuine French. Although the three journals of the town received full liberty to issue their papers, they instantly closed their establishments. The inhabitants either observed a sinister and stubborn silence, or they presumed upon the patience of their visitors by uttering the most abusive language. Being prevented from drawing the sword, they took hold of the needle, and inflicted stings where more serious injuries were denied them.

Nevertheless the German army had managed to make itself at home. Our two volunteers had quartered themselves in the second story of a good hotel, while Haller had taken up his abode in a room below. The two friends had partaken of a good dinner and now looked from the open window, smoking a cigar and exchanging remarks concerning the town and its people. All at once Schultze touched his neighbor's arm and said in an undertone:

"Look at that fellow across. He looks at us, as if he meant to swallow us. There now, you are too late. When he saw you turn your head, he shrank back from the window. I wonder whether he knows you."

"Hardly, August. I never was in Nancy before."

"Then why should he hide from you."

"That's hard to tell. Perhaps he was ashamed of his impudent curiosity."

At this moment martial music sounded from the end of the street, and when our friends looked in that direction they noticed a regiment of infantry coming towards them with banners flying and marching to the time of the warlike strain. This attractive spectacle proved too much for the spiteful indifference of the town-folks, and head after head peeped from the windows of the street, until at last every house contributed its participators in the lively scene. Just as the band marched abreast the hotel, Schultze again elbowed his friend in a stealthy manner, and whispered:

"There he is again: look up, but guardedly."

Miller followed the hint and perceived a head in the opposite window which watched him with jealous care, while all other eyes were turned towards the pageant below. No sooner, however, did the person see himself observed when he too dropped his glance, and seemed to become as attentive a spectator as his neighbors.

Miller began to reflect. Had he seen the face before? He thought so. But where? That puzzled him. He retired from the window and took a position from which he could see without being seen himself. Then arming his eye with an opera-glass, which he carried for military purposes, he looked steadily across and soon had the satisfaction of seeing the suspicious head at the window again. The eyes looked towards the hotel as before and no sooner had Miller cast a careful glance at them through the glass when he started up and exclaimed:

"Schultze, you were right after all. That fellow knows me, and I know him. You recollect, I told you about a man, who set the police-officer on my track at Havre?"

"I do, Sir; and that chap across—"

"Is the self-same man."

Schultze laughed.

"Well, circumstances alter cases" he said. "The eye of the basilisk has become harmless. Let the fellow stare to his heart's content."

"Still, I should like to know where to put him. I must surely have met him in Paris, if I only knew where."

"Well, Robert, I see nothing to keep you from finding out. What hinders you from paying the fellow a visit?"

"You would not want me to break nolens, volens into a peaceful house?"

"Peaceful indeed! I bet you the inmates of that house are no better than the rest. But you need not "*break in*" as you call it. Why not knock and ask admittance in the politest voice imaginable?"

Miller reflected a moment; then springing up, he said:

"You are right, August. Let us make the attempt at all events. This surveillance annoys me, harmless, as much it is."

The two hastened down stairs and across the street. Ascend-

ing the steps before the house in question, they rang the bell, but had to repeat the signal and moreover wait five minutes before steps became audible within and the door was opened by a woman. On seeing the hostile uniforms she shrank back and would have shut the door in the face of the visitors, if they had not prevented this by a forcible demonstration.

"Excuse our call" said Miller in French "and be assured that we mean nothing evil. I saw the face of a gentleman up stairs, with whom I am acquainted. I would thank you for showing us the way to his room."

"A gentleman up stairs?" the woman responded. "Monsieur must be mistaken. We have no gentleman up stairs in this house."

"But we are positive; we have both seen the person in question."

"It cannot be! You must have mistaken the house; for there is nobody up stairs in this building."

Miller was at a loss, how to proceed; but Schultze soon drew him from this dilemma.

"Mille tonners! Kreutz-Donnerwetter!" he exclaimed, mixing his French and German. "Old lady, do you think, you can lead us by the nose, par le nez. Our eyes are better than yours any day, and if you refuse to lead us, we shall have to be our own guides. Voi la tout."

The woman seemed to understand this mixture better than Miller's polite and perfect French; for she shrank back and invited the officers to step in. She declared herself ready to take them up stairs, but they would find her statement correct and the upper story empty. Her words were cut short by Schultze's imperative "allons done! montous, s'il vous plait," and seeing further remonstrances useless, she ascended the stairs, closely followed by the two Germans. She opened the doors of the front rooms, which were indeed found empty, and afterwards, on demand, those of the back-rooms also with no better result. The woman assumed an injured mien.

"Did I not tell you, Messieurs?" she exclaimed with a scornful admixture in her voice.

"You did indeed" retorted Schultze, who chafed under the idea

of being beaten by a woman, "but if you hadn't been so slow to admit us, the search might have turned out very different. We leave you, Madam, to enjoy your triumph; but we kindly advise you to exhort your invisible lodger not to pry too deeply into our affairs. We are somewhat ticklish in such matters."

"You oughtn't to have been so hard on her" said Miller on reaching the street. "Perhaps she was really ignorant of the fellow's presence."

"Pshaw! don't you believe it! These women are worse than the men. They know they are beaten, but refuse to accept the situation. I have seen some of them rave like maniacs, presuming boldly upon the privileges of their sex. If they want to be treated as ladies, let them behave as snch. If a man insults me, I knock him down: against a woman I have no remedy. I have seen them spit upon our men and go out free."

"Well, August, by doing so they degrade themselves, not us. As to the woman in yon house, you could hardly expect her to take our part against her countryman."

"No, no, I do not blame her much. Only I thought best to leave a warning for your benevolent friend. If he pokes his nose into your affairs, he shall have it flattened in the most approved style, depend upon it."

The rest of the afternoon passed rapidly away, and no sooner had the two friends taken their supper and secured the necessary furlough, when Miller invited Schultze to accompany him on the meditated excursion. It was after seven o'clock when they left the hotel; but, as the days were long then, the light had in no way abated. They walked through the town and the suburbs until they reached the bridge which leads across the Meurthe. After passing the bridge, they turned to the right and followed the road which leads to the village of Tomblaine. It was a beautiful evening. The fine chausee, the winding river, the changing fields interspersed with villas: everything combined to make the walk a delightful one. Yet the two wanderers were not in the mood to enjoy it. While Miller anticipated the greater pleasures of the impending rendez-vous, Schultze was pondering on the character of the revelations which his friend had promised him. They smoked the unavoidable cigar with greater reticence than

ever, and only ceased when Miller stopped at the garden-gate of Monsieur Hercules Dupre, and told Schultze that the next five minutes would reveal to him the cause of the change which he imagined to have noticed in his friend. Schultze merely nodded, and readily followed him to the front door which was at once opened in obedience to the ringing of the bell. A servant conducted them to the parlor, where they found themselves vis-a-vis to a young lady in whom Schultze at once recognized their protegee against the encroachments of the Turcos near Froschweiler.

He glanced at Miller and smiled, as if he meant to say: "I thought as much." Then bowing to the lady, he said:

"Miss Delmont, if I am not mistaken."

"Your servant, Monsieur; and in you I see Monsieur le lieutenant de Schultze?"

"Schultze without the "*de*," madam. The Schultzes are too numerous for such aspirations."

"Eh bien, Monsieur Schultze, asseyez-vous! sit down then, Aunt Aspasia, this is Monsieur Schultze. Monsieur Schultze, ma tante, Mademoiselle Aspasia Dupre."

Schultze bowed with all the grace at his disposal. The old lady of course did likewise; but she seemed to be both startled and alarmed at Pauline's extensive acquaintances in the German army.

"I am happy to make monsieur's acquaintance," she said; "but how does it happen that you know him? It is rather strange that you should know so many of our country's enemies."

"It *is* strange, aunty; and indeed I struggled against my fate, as these gentlemen can testify. They rendered me an important service some time ago, and as a recompense I repelled them by my rudeness. My conduct pained me deeply at the time, and has been a source of regret ever since; but I persuaded myself that the cause of my country demanded a sacrifice and that I must not see the enemies of France in the light of personal friends. I thought I had succeeded, Aunty, until your arrival this morning undeceived me. If I am wrong, you share the blame; also, why must you bring into my presence as your benefactor the very man to whom I am myself so deeply indebted."

She said this half seriously, half jokingly, in a manner truly

captivating, and when, immediately afterwards, she begged her guests to excuse the rudeness with which she had kept them standing so long, and to accept a seat for a good long visit, they were glad enough to comply with her request and to forget, for a while, in the happiest conversation with this fair daughter of France, the bloody conflict with her sons. Both parties endeavored to exclude all topics which might lead to a disturbance of this harmonious intercourse; but in spite of their resolve such topics would crowd themselves into their thoughts. "Of what the heart is full, the lips flow over," is a true German proverb, and so we need not wonder that its truth was proved on this occasion. The ladies would now and then suffer a reproach to escape their lips, and the men say a few words in defense of the cause for which they fought; but accusation and defense were free from that bitterness which alienates instead of unites. The evening passed rapidly, and when the two visitors rose to take their leave, darkness had taken the place of the twilight by means of which they had readily found their way.

"It is late," said Miss Delmont, gazing through the door into the increasing gloom. "Will you be able to find your way?"

"Without any trouble, madam. We soldiers learn to find our way by day and night."

"You have shown at least your skill in finding your way to the very heart of France. So you apprehend no danger? There are many Frenchmen fanatical enough to slay you in the dark, provided they could do so with impunity."

"What you say, is not very flattering to your countrymen."

"There are bad elements in every nation; but I am wrong in thus detaining you. It is growing darker every minute, and unless you prefer to remain our guests over-night—"

"We could not think of that as duty calls us to our posts."

"Then you had better go at once, for I cannot help thinking that some evil will befal you on the way. I may be foolish in talking thus, but I cannot help it, and you must promise to show yourselves before you leave Nancy, if it were only to convince me that my fears were groundless."

"You are very kind, Miss Delmont," said Miller, the ardor of

his eyes and the pressure of his hand showing that he meant what he said. "You may depend upon it that we shall not fail to obey an injunction which is so much in keeping with our own inclinations."

A few more words of farewell, and the two stood in the gloom of a clouded night-sky. The heat of the day had called up a storm, which heavy blasts and scattered raindrops were on the point of ushering in. Our friends had passed through too many tempests in both hemispheres not to read these symptoms aright.

"That looks squally," said Schultze. "I should not wonder if we would have a regular hurricane before many minutes. Come, friend, let us bestir ourselves, or we shall be wet to the skin before we reach our quarters."

They struck out accordingly; but before they were half-way through the narrow lane which ran from Dupre's estate to the main road, a fiery lightning flash darted across the sky whose suddenness brought the wanderers to a momentary stop.

"I thought as much," said Schultze; "now double quick, I tell you."

"Wait a moment," exclaimed Miller; "there is something at my heels whose nature I must first examine. Auch! you nasty creature! I really think it is the ugly poodle of Miss Aspasia."

"Did he bite you? Well, let him alone, then. We have no time to trouble ourselves with crabbed poodles."

On they went, the flashes becoming more frequent every minute, and heavy claps of thunder betraying the rapid approach of the tempest. It was so dark now, that they had to grope their way, assisted by the flashes which, for a moment, shed a brilliant light on the benighted region. By means of this light they had traversed the greater portion of the lane, and congratulated themselves on the prospective relief of the chaussee, when all at once a flash of unusual brightness nearly blinded their eyes and, by the accompanying concussion, showed them that a tree in their immediate neighborhood had been struck. Again they stopped looking at the work of destruction which endless flashes of a less violent nature kept constantly in view. Take in addition to this the roaring wind, the gushing rain and an occasional howl on the part of the dog, and you will confess that our imagination is ca-

pable of creating more pleasant scenes than that through which our volunteers were condemned to pass.

The worst, however, was yet to come. The two friends were still gazing at the burning tree, comparing, perhaps, in their mind the destructive force of man with the more fearful power of the unchained elements, when all at once the crack of the rifle mingled with the deeper growl of thunder, and a bullet passed so close by Miller's head that it cut the strap which passed from the cap around his chin to secure it from the fury of the wind. Away the cap went and a moment later a mass of auburn curls flew around his head, adding to the bewilderment into which this sudden attack had plunged him. He was still striving to free his eyes from the obstructing hair, when Schultze's voice struck his ear.

"Down with you, Robert!" he cried. "Take to cover or the rascals will take better aim the next time."

These words were backed by a powerful grip around his arm, and when Miller came to his senses he found himself crouching in the corner of a fence.

"St!" warned Schultze. "They must not know where we are, while we, on the other hand, must try to learn their number and position."

"So we must. I declare, this sudden attack has quite bewildered me. I feel even now as in a dream."

"You have been in one for several hours, I fear," said Schultze with a noiseless laugh; "but now I advise you to wake up, or your chances of seeing this syren again are slim indeed."

"Why, August, you do not mean to insinuate—"

"Just now I insinuate nothing but the propriety of getting out of this scrape. Listen! the poodle is on their scent. Wouldn't it be funny if the dog should help us to track the master."

These remarks seemed to intimate that Schultze believed that Miss Delmont was implicated in this attack; but although Miller repelled this thought with indignation, he remained silent, deeming time and place poorly adapted for argumentation. As to the dog, Schultze was evidently right. The animal kept up a furious and incessant bark, and guided by the sound of its voice, the two officers crept along the fence in order to gain the number

and position of their foes. Suddenly Schultze touched Miller's shoulder and whispered:

"There they are! Get your revolver ready for a charge."

Miller obeyed and peered into the darkness to catch a glimpse of the enemy, when Schultze all at once jumped up with a curse, and discharged his revolver. His friend also sprung to his feet, and in the occasional illumination of the flashes the two could see how a dark figure made his way through the garden with a velocity which not only defied pursuit but also betrayed a perfect familiarity with the nature of the ground.

"Confound the rascal!" muttered Schultze, whose temper the weather and the attack had evidently soured. "A minute sooner and my revolver would have stopped the fellow and compelled him to show his colors. I'd give my little finger to see into this affair."

"So would I, August; though for different reasons. If we knew all, you would see that your suspicion is totally unfounded."

"May be—may be not. But never mind my suspicion now; what I *know* is, that I am heartily tired of all adventures which taste after romance. The deuce take all assassins, syrens and storms like this. Come, friend, let's wheel for home. I'm wet to the skin already."

"I'm sorry that I was the innocent cause of so much annoyance," said Miller with a touch of vexation.

"Who cares for that?" cried Schultze. "'Tis only for you I care. You are so soft to-night that I am afraid to see you melt under my hands. The major would make a nice face to see his friend Miller reduced to a mud puddle. Come on, friend Robert, come on!"

Half amused, half vexed, Miller followed Schultze's admonition. The storm had meanwhile spent its greatest fury, and the wanderers found no difficulty in reaching the chaussee. Once there, their task was comparatively easy. Nothing but the challenge of the numerous sentinels stopped their progress, and just as the clock of the cathedral struck the eleventh hour, they ascended the stairs leading to their room. They were both tired and in no humor for conversation. No sooner, therefore, had the wet clothes been removed, than the friends sought their beds

aud fell asleep, yielding to that powerful influence to which even the greatest mind and strongest body have to succumb.

When Miller awoke next morning the sun shone into his room. He started up and was surprised to see Schultze's bed empty. Had he slept so long and soundly? Why had Schultze failed to waken him? Could it be barely possible—

He jumped from his bed and began to dress in the greatest hurry. In this occupation he was interrupted by his servant, who brought his boots and asked for orders.

"Where is Schultze?" was Miller's first inquiry.

"The lieutenant has gone out."

"Where to?"

"I do not know."

"When?"

"Very early."

"Why did you not waken me sooner?"

"The lieutenant would not let me. 'Carl,' said he to me; 'don't you disturb your master. He went through much fatigue last night and needs rest.'"

"And that is all?"

"All Iknow at least."

"Is the major in?"

"No, Sir; he too went out. I saw him mount his horse and ride away."

"It is well; you can go."

"Shall I bring in your breakfast?"

"No, Sir; not now. I'll let you know when I want it."

By this time he had finished dressing and was on the point of leaving the room, when hasty steps became audible on the stairway and Schultze burst into the room. His face looked flushed and after a hurried "good morning," he threw himself upon a chair to recover the breath of which rapid motion had evidently deprived him. Miller looked at him with contracted brows.

"What does this mean?" he inquired moodily.

"It means that your friends acted for you while you slept."

"Am I a child to require such treatment?" Miller retorted angrily.

"No, but a patient whom the physician is obliged to put under chloroform."

"Explain yourself. Why do you act and speak in riddles?"

"Now, don't get angry, Robert," Schultze admonished in a soothing voice. "What I have done I did from motives of friendship. So, if I erred, you must blame the heart, not the will."

"Come to the point," said Miller. "You rack me with your preambles."

"What a passion!" said Schultze. "Your conduct convinces me that I did right in clearing up all doubts."

"What doubts, August?"

"Why, concerning Miss Delmont's implication in yesterday's affair."

"So you were there?"

"I was."

"And your suspicion?"

"Was only too well founded."

Miller groaned. Schultze took his hand and said:

"Poor Robert!"

Miller freed his hand and said impatiently:

"Don't pity me: tell me rather what you discovered. I can bear it all; but I want truth, the whole truth."

"You shall have it, Robert. But sit down and do not disconcert me by such a doleful face."

Miller obeyed and Schultze began:

"I had an ugly dream, last night, Robert. I dreamt that they attacked us and killed you before my eyes. The terror awakened me. I saw that the night was nearly spent, and finding you asleep I began to think whether it would not be well to get up and investigate this affair before you returned to consciousness. I knew that the worst certainty would annoy you less than this harrowing doubt, and that you would forgive my interference in consideration of my motives. Getting up softly, I dressed and went down stairs to see the major and consult him regarding the best mode of carrying out my intentions. He at once sanctioned my plan and put at my disposal a dozen of men for any emergencies that might arise. I picked my men, and started for the scene of yesterday's adventure at double quick. It isn't far, you know

and soon a charred and splintered tree betrayed to us the exact spot. The rain had softened the ground, and we discovered, not only our own footsteps, but also the tracks of our assailant. My men greeted them with a hurrah, but I felt an ugly foreboding; for the tracks ran straight in the direction of the house where we spent such pleasant hours."

"But that alone is not sufficient to convict her, August. Who knows—"

"I know, Robert. To tell the truth, I would rather not know; for she is really a splendid woman; but what's the use of playing possum with facts that stare us so mercilessly in the face. The tracks ran not only towards the house—they led actually *into* it, and we found the muddy footprints of our would-be assassin in parlor and hall."

Miller moaned again; then he tried another excuse.

"He may have forced his presence upon the ladies," he said. "Don't let us condemn them too rashly, August."

Schultze shook his head.

"You don't know all," he said; "or you would give up trying to clear her."

"So there is more to learn? Did you see—did you hear her?"

"I neither saw nor heard her."

"But why not? It strikes me that justice would have required to take her testimony; to listen to her explanations."

"Robert, that was impossible."

"Impossible? and why, August?"

"Simply, because she was not there. They had all fled: *the house was empty*!"

CHAPTER XIII.

West of Metz the first and second German armies stopped their victorious march: theirs was the unpleasant but highly important task of holding Bazaine in the living vice from which his most frantic exertions were incapable of freeing him. The two armies,

however, had given birth to a third one, whose privilege it was to march on Paris, in support of the troops of Frederic William, which had never halted, but marching from Nancy, where we met them, had reached the advanced position of Vitry-le-Francais, and Froyes. The fourth army was entrusted to Albert, the Crown-Prince of Saxony, who had earned the reputation of a fearless soldier and a skilful general on the hard-fought battle-fields of Bohemia in 1866, and now, by the splendid handling of his troops at Nouart, Beaumont and Sedan, proved the wisdom of King William's selection. Taking a north-eastern direction and leaving Verdun on his left, he rivalled with the Prussian Crown-Prince in wonders of endurance and rapidity, to dispute with him the glory of arriving first under the forts of Paris.

And the French: how did they receive the news of reverses, the like of which are wanting in the pages of history? What did they do to retrieve losses which a cool judgment pronounced well nigh irrepairable? Did they in good grace accept the situation as it was, or did they, with genuine French over-estimation and hollowness, blind themselves and the nation, and continue, with criminal recklessness, a war which, with horrible profusencss, heaped misery upon the assailants, and ten-fold misery upon the assailed? The reader knows the answer to this inquiry. Instead of acknowledging their own want of preparation and the manifest superiority of their adversaries, they cried about treason, and cast infamy upon the very leaders whose names they had hitherto covered with an idolatrous adulation. Olivier was a fool, Grammont a knave, Le Bœuf a military bungler: yes, even Napoleon, whose slightest hints they had for eighteen years obeyed with servile submissiveness, was all at once reduced from a demi-god to the adventurer which he had been before the 2nd December '52 and to the perfidious tyrant which in reality he had been all the while.

Napoleon had left Metz just in time to escape the fate of Bazaine. He fled to Verdun, where McMahon was vainly endeavoring to create order out of the chaos of the French armies under his command. Now that Bazaine had failed, Frossard been killed and Le Bœuf been dismissed, McMahon's defeats at Weissenburg and Wœrth had been pardoned, not forgotten, and the command

French Peasants fleeing from Metz.

of all the available regular troops placed in his hands. He received Napoleon with bitter reproaches, charging him with having abandoned him and a few isolated corps to the onslaught of an entire army. I do not pretend to decide whether these reproaches were just or not: I merely want to show how much the authority of Napoleon must even then have been shaken, to embolden one of his creatures to such language. The emperor was then nothing but a cipher. Eugenie was regent; but even from her hands the reins of government were fast escaping. She only sustained herself by sacrificing the ministry who had counselled the war under the maddening applause of the people, and now staggered under their execration for the very same reason. Olivier resigned amidst the insulting hoots of the Legislature, and Palicao, the libertine, the despiser of the people, the descendent of the ancient regime, was lifted in his place, because it was believed, that it required a mad courage, an arbitrary despotic character like his to save the country from the extreme peril into which the folly of the empire had plunged it:

Napoleon, tho' no military genius, saw well enough that McMahon would be incapable of holding Verdun, and therefore wisely retreated with his son to Rheims. McMahon followed soon afterwards, directing the march of his army to Chalons, and making such preparations at the famous camp of that place as to lead the expectant wor'd to the belief that the renowned town which had, once before, seen the fate of the world decided on its plains, was destined to witness such another battle. But in this the world was disappointed. If McMahon had acted on his original intention, or if, unable to cope with the victorious Germans, he had cautiously and slowly retreated towards the capital, he might have much retarded and surely would have greatly lessened their marvelous achievements. But no! It seemed as if an irrepressible fate was bound to push the French to the extremity to which we see them to-day reduced. Contrary to all expectations, contrary to the dictates of prudence and caution, the marshal conceived the desperate idea of abandoning the capital and marching to the relief of Bazaine. In accordance with this idea he evacuated Chalons with such rapidity that he was compelled to burn the camp and a portion of the collected supplies.

First he aimed at Rheims which he reached by means of the railway connecting the two towns. From thence he turned to the north-east, passing Rethel and aiming at the valley of the Chiers, which contains the railroad to Thionville and the fortresses of Sedan and Montmedy, under whose guns he imagined to be able to execute the movement with impunity. Once in Thionville he would find little difficulty in joining Bazaine and then, with superior numbers, fall on the communications of the invaders, whose fate seemed sealed, in case all these movements were crowned with success. *In case*, there was the trouble. The mere boldness of a plan does not entitle the conceiver to the claims of genius. Success is generally the test of excellence. By yielding to the temptation of executing his Quixotic plan, McMahon committed as great a crime against his country, as if he had betrayed it on purpose. Of course, his motives would have been much more criminal in the latter case; but the result of treason could not have been any more fatal than that of his boldness proved to be. Moltke's designs were marked by boldness as well; but it was a boldness adapted to his means, and based on a perfect knowledge of his ability to carry them out. Witness the battle of Thionville or Mars-la-Tour, where a feeble corps was thrown between Metz and Verdun to stop the retreat of the entire army of Bazaine; witness the investment of Paris and its millions, while the rest of France prepared to raise the siege. Bolder movements than those history cannot exhibit; nor can she show movements more faithfully executed.

Still, if the plan of McMahon was fraught with danger to France, it was no less perilous to the Germans. Let the marshal succeed in covering up his movements for a few days; let him succeed in gaining the start for a day or two, and the success of the whole plan is pretty well secured. Once at Montmedy, his progress to Thionville and Metz can no longer be prevented. But this start the Germans do not allow him, this time. The Uhlan, the Hussar, these agile forerunners of their army, hover around McMahon as the hawk above its prey. Now repelled, they return to-morrow; driven at one place, they attack at another, and never lose connection with the retiring foe. True, for a little while, they are ignorant as to the direction in which the main columns

of the foe retreat; but fortunately Rheims lies north-west of Chalons, and McMahon's march upon Sedan is at first a withdrawal from it. When at last he wheels and marches upon Rethel, the Uhlans are fully aware of his intentions and on quickly established telegraphs flash the startling news to head-quarters. Quickly the two invading armies face about, the Saxon Crown-Prince on the right, in advance, because favored by his more northern position; but his royal colleague coming up with marches that tax the sterling qualities of his soldiers to the utmost.

Between the rivers Aisne and Meuse the forest of Argonne runs from the north to the south. Through its defiles and along its ridges the German armies executed their northward march, until they reached the road which runs from Grand-Pre across the mountains to Stenay. The French at the same time marched on the turnpike, which leads from Le Chene to Sedan, occupying a line parallel to that of their foes. Still, they seemed to have had no clear idea of their proximity, probably deeming their cavalry only a few detached pickets, sent out to harass and delay them. In spite of all the care bestowed upon the French cavalry by Napoleon, no part of his army showed its inferiority to the enemy more strikingly, than that important branch. While the light Uhlans were always near the hostile army and posted on its position, the French horsemen seemed totally unmindful of the importance of feeling the enemy. So in this instance. So little were the French aware of the approach of the Germans in full strength, that it was left to the hostile shells to convey the first information into the camp at Beaumont, and to drive the soldiers from their dinner. But let us endeavor to trace in detail this stupendous struggle, which began on the 27th of August with great expectations of the French, and ended on the 2nd of September, with the downfall of the empire. On the 27th, the third Saxon regiment of cavalry, supported by a squadron of Uhlans and a battery, met a regiment of chasseurs-a-cheval at Busancy, a borough between Vouziers and Stenay. This was the first important cavalry fight of the war, and it ended in a victory for the German arms. On the 29th, two squadrons of Prussian Hussars met Turcos and Zouaves at the village of Voneq between Vouziers and Astigny. The French occupied the village, which lies on an

eminence and is inaccessible to cavalry; but the Hussars, nothing daunted, alighted and carried the village by assault, taking the whole body of the French prisoners. The first fight, however, deserving the name of a battle, occurred on the 29th at Nouart. Frederic William's army had not yet arrived; but Albert of Saxony, anxious to prevent the further advance of McMahon, attacked and repulsed him. On the next day, the 30th, he was reinforced by the 4th and the Prussian and the first Bavarian corps, and these three corps fell at Beaumont, on the left bank of the Meuse, upon the French. As said before, the French were surprised in their camp; but so favorable was the territory for defense, that they found no difficulty in rallying. The battle now assumed a most fearful character: rivalling in carnage with the bloodiest of the war. The French were slowly but steadily driven towards Beaumont, which town fell into the hands of the Germans, and remained in their possession in spite of Failly's desperate attempts to retake it. At the same time the Saxons and Bavarians directed their efforts against Mouzon, which was defended by the French with equal tenacity, but finally fell into the hands of the Germans with 3,000 prisoners and 23 cannons. The principal fruits of the victory, however, consisted in the circumstance that McMahon's advance was effectually checked, and the theater of war confined to the territory between the Meuse and the Belgian frontier.

King William and the Emperor Napoleon had both been witnesses of the battle of Beaumont, the former from the heights of Sommauthe, the latter from the ridge at the back of the French camp. When the battle was over, the German leaders met in council and matured the plan which resulted in the capture of McMahon's army. The Prussians, on the 31st, marched upon Carrignan on the river Chiers, and beat the right wing of the French under Failly, thus cutting off the last avenue leading to the east. The army of Frederic William, on the other hand, took a north-western course, and halted on the west of Sedan, thus shutting up that avenue, and leaving open nothing but the road to Bouillon and the Belgian frontier.

As yet, however, the French seemed to fear no such calamity as that which was to befall them two days later, for they made no

attempt to escape to Belgium, until it was too late. When they awoke to the full consciousness of their situation, it was too late. They saw themselves attacked with the greatest impetuosity on the south by the Bavarians and Saxons, and while these troops engaged their attention, the balance of the German army closed the gap which the iron girdle of the besiegers had thus long shown.

Eye-witnesses describe the struggle around Sedan as fearful in the extreme; but the losses were chiefly on the side of the French. True, some of their troops still fought with the fury of despair; but on the greater part the demoralizing effect of continued defeat began to tell. They fell back from hill to hill, until the whole immense army was crowded together in the immediate neighborhood of Sedan. Then, of course, the last chance was gone. The bravest troops want room to manœuvre in, and the French troops, huddled together around and in the streets of Sedan, were only so many victims to be shot down by the far-reaching and fearfully efficient artillery of the Germans. McMahon received a severe wound in the side, and the command passed to General Wimpfen; but this was a measure nearly useless, for the soldiers were fast reaching the point, where they forgot the necessity of obedience. Escaping from the battle-field and the control of their officers, they poured into the streets of the town and committed excesses such as only the reckless and despairing are capable of committing. The inhabitants learned to their sorrow that under such circumstances the friend is often more to be feared than the foe. Yielding to despair themselves, they sought such places of refuge as their houses would offer, and waited in fear and trembling for the hour that was to decide their destiny. It came at last, and the white flag on the walls of Sedan announced to the wondering world that the army and person of Napoleon were prisoners in the hands of the Germans and the days of his rule at an end.

And the friends, whose adventures we have made it our business to follow: did they also assist in this great achievement? Let us retrace our steps, and see whether we can discover them in the turmoil of battle.

When Frederic William's army had faced about and commen-

ced their northward march, the Bavarian jægers had been amongst the quickest and most advanced. They had come too late for the battle of Nouart; but got their full share of that of Beaumont. Rivalling in bravery and rapidity with the Saxons and Prussians, they had pushed on from position to position, until the town was taken and the battle decided. Major Haller and his friends, the American volunteers, had fought with their wonted valor; but, in the evening, when the roll was called, the Americans failed to answer to their names. Where could they be? Nobody had seen them fall, nor had they been wounded to the knowledge of anybody. So their absence could only be explained on the assumption that they had been taken prisoners, they and about twenty more, who also failed to answer to their names. A little later, this supposition was confirmed by one of the wounded who was brought in. He had been an eye-witness of their capture. Led away by his ardor, Miller had penetrated too deeply into the narrow lanes of Daigny, and thus been cut off. He, Schultze and all the men had fought like lions; but all their efforts had failed, in consequence of the heavy odds against them. Just then the narrator had been wounded; but he had retained sufficient consciousness to witness the disarming of his comrades. His story was received with a mixture of satisfaction and regret; the former because it set aside all fears of their being killed; the latter, because it destroyed all hopes of an immediate reunion with their comrades. At the same time it fired the hearts of the jægers, and lent to their subsequent movements an asperity, a ferocity which had thus far been foreign to them. True, this spirit was in a measure shared by all the troops of both armies. You cannot let the demons of war loose upon the world without soon witnessing their brutalizing influence. As battle after battle claims its victims, as village after village feels the scourge of war, the heart of the gentlest becomes hardened; the consideration for right and justice dulled; the regard for person and property blunted. The villages around Sedan bear frightful testimony to the truth of this assertion; but none of them more plainly than the unfortunate village of Bazailles. Against it marched the Bavarian troops, at their head the jægers. The French contested every inch of ground, and in the long and bloody struggle for its pos-

session, the passions of the soldiers were roused to their highest pitch. Nevertheless Bazailles would have fared no worse than the other places, if unfortunately the wretched inhabitants had not taken it into their heads to join the conflict against the invaders, and fire upon them from their houses. This is an offense which no soldier will forgive. He battles patiently against the greatest odds, and under the most trying circumstances; but if the civilian joins the strife against him; if the bullet of the assassin mingles with that of his legitimate opponent: then woe to the community which thus wantonly arouses the tiger in his bosom.

The village was taken, when, all at once, reports of musketry sounded from the rear, and hostile bullets found their way into the back of the victors. Little clouds of smoke at the windows explained the origin of the fire. "They shoot from the houses!" burst from the lips of the men, and this cry, borne from mouth to mouth, soon reached the thundering force of the avalanche, as it rolls from the mountain-crest to the doomed valley below. In a moment the doors of the houses, from which the shots had been fired, were burst in and the inhabitants shot or bayonetted. Then the torch was applied, and, before the expiration of many minutes, the greedy element licked the walls and sent its fiery tongue far above the roofs.

It is a sad but undisputed fact that in this world the innocent must suffer with the guilty. The enraged Bavarians did not confine their destruction to the houses from which the shots had been fired. Before they knew it, their rage had carried them to others, until at last every building in the village had fallen a prey to the flames. The officers did their best to curb the fury of their men, and save, at least, such women and children, as endeavored to escape from the havoc. Foremost among them was Major Haller, whose cooler northern temperament was foreign to the frenzy which seemed to have seized his men. He exhorted here, commanded there, and in several instances interfered bodily between the slayers and their victims. This was especially the case with the inhabitants of a large and handsome villa, situated on the skirts of the village. The house was burning, like all the others, when Haller arrived before it. Nor would he have en-

deavored to save *it* from destruction, perhaps, because he saw the vanity of the attempt; perhaps, because he deemed this punishment of the treacherous inhabitants just. What attracted him was the piteous wailing of an elderly woman, whom the soldiers had dragged from the cellar of the burning villa, together with a younger woman and a man, who struggled hard to free himself from the grasp of two stout Bavarians. The shrieks of the woman, the curses of the man, and the shouts of the frenzied soldiers formed a concert which was hideous even to the ears of the major, accustomed to the sounds of war though he was. The only redeeming feature in the horrible tableau was the figure and conduct of the younger woman. Anxious as the major was to save and shelter, he could not abstain from letting his eyes rest a moment on the girl. She stood and gazed upon her assailants with a mixture of defiance and self-possession truly startling. True, her dress was tattered, and her hair flew in dishevelled masses around her handsome face; but this disorder, perhaps, lent an additional attraction to the apparition. Even the enraged soldiers seemed to feel the influence of this girl; for they abstained from touching her, wreaking their entire fury upon the struggling man and the screaming dame.

"Shut up, old witch, or I'll put a damper on your whistle!" cried one.

"Stand aside, boys, and let me run my tooth-pick into the fellow's belly;" exclaimed another, approaching the male prisoner with pointed bayonet. Haller saw that no time was to be lost, if he wanted to save the people. So, acting on the spur of the moment, he exclaimed:

"Company, attention! Fall into line! Right face! March! *march!*"

This stratagem had the desired effect. Obedience had become their second nature, and, hearing the well-known words of command, they executed the movements with the regularity of clockwork. The officers evidently guesssed the intention of the major, and, entering into his spirit, led their men to the further pursuit of the enemy. Haller now rode up to the trio.

"My friends!" he addressed them in French; "you had better withdraw from here at once. This time I was able to save you;

a second time you might be less fortunate. Listen to my advice, and take to your heels."

Without waiting for a reply, he turned and galloped after his men. The released prisoners, on the other hand, drew a deep breath of relief, and, after a moment's consultation, hastened past the burning villa into a court-yard. The stables and barns had not escaped the fate of the main building; but, as they were numerous and extensive, the flames had only partly done their work, leaving, thus far, a few of the smaller sheds intact. Towards one of them the man drew his companions, and drew, from its shelter, a horse hitched to a covered spring-wagon. After helping the women to a seat, he jumped in himself, and drove from the burning village with all the haste which the strength of the horse and the condition of the road would allow. But before we follow the trio, we must turn back a day, and trace the steps of some other persons, in whose fate we are more deeply interested.

CHAPTER XIV.

It was a sad moment for our friends, the volunteers, when they were marched through the gate of Sedan, on the evening of the 30th of August. In addition to the natural vexation at being captured, they suffered under the ungenerous conduct of their captors. A German prisoner seemed to be a rare sight to the French soldiers and people; for not only did everybody stare at the dozen jægers as the eighth wonder of the world, but everybody seemed determined to wreak upon them the whole spite which the victories of the Germans had naturally excited. Taunts, abuses, blows were incessantly showered upon them, and the officers, instead of redressing their wrongs, were eager to increase them. Before reaching the fortress, the prisoners had lost their watches, their purses, and what other valuables seemed desirable to their guard. At first Miller had protested to the commanding officer, in the name of his comrades; but when he found that his

remonstrances only aggravated their injuries, he advised the others to maintain a contemptuous silence, himself setting them a good example.

The fatal First had not yet sprung from the lap of Time, and the prisoners therefore found comparative order in Sedan. The inhabitants as yet had no idea of the great humiliation in store for them and their army, and found time to insult a few helpless prisoners. A mob soon gathered around them and, but for the protection of the guard they might have been assaulted, perhaps murdered. As it was, numberless insults rained upon their devoted heads; nor could, or would the guard protect them against an occasional stone, hurled against them by the mob.

A sigh of relief escaped their breasts, when at last they were marched through an archway and shut in by the high walls of a court. There they were left to themselves, with a guard at the entrance, whose duty it was, not only to keep them in, but also to prevent the entrance of the curious mob. Miller and Schultze seated themselves on a stone step and indulged in melancholy reflections, when, all at once, Schultze started up, and, touching his friend, pointed in the direction of the entrance. Miller looked and he, too, could not suppress a motion of surprise, for there, behind the yard, stood the man of Nancy and of Havre, he who, on his flight from France, had shown such lively interest in his ruin. In Nancy the stranger had not dared to meet his glance, as the reader will recollect; but now he braved the searching eye of Miller with the greatest assurance, smiling scornfully and finally shaking his hand in a threatening manner. A moment afterwards he had disappeared.

"I don't like that fellow's face," said Schultze. "I fear, his appearance means mischief."

"I don't admire him, either; but still, what could he do? The French have too much to do, to think of raking up old affairs."

"'Tis hard to tell. This fellow seems to hate you, and hatred is a powerful lever. At all events it won't hurt us to be on our guard."

The subject was dropped, for at that moment a noise was heard overhead, and when the prisoners looked up, they saw a door open in the second story of a barn-like building, and a dozen

bundles of straw pitched into the yard. They were then informed that the straw was all the accommodation for the night they could receive. At the same time they received their supper consisting of a slice of rye-bread for each man and a bucket of water for common use. After that the ponderous gate was closed on them, and they were left to themselves without any cover to protect them against the night-air, their own blankets having been stolen from them after their capture. In vain did they look for fuel to build a fire. Not the smallest stick could be found, and, to make matters worse, a chilling drizzling rain began to fall, and to penetrate their clothes and the straw on which they were to sleep. Fortunately, the roof of the barn above mentioned projected several feet over the wall, and as the north-wind drove the rain away from the building, the men succeeded in securing at least a tolerably dry sleeping-place. Huddling together as closely as possible, they endeavored to keep warm as best they could, cursing the moment that reduced them to captivity and waiting impatiently for the re-appearance of daylight.

While they thus count the minutes and hours that seem endless let us follow the man who had attracted the attention of Schultze. It was growing dark when he left the archway, wrapped in a long cloak, his slouched hat drawn so deeply over his brow as to conceal his face. He walked through several streets, muttering an occasional curse and now and then quickening his steps, as if spurred by the impetuosity of his thoughts and feelings. At length he stopped before a stately building whose stone walls loomed darkly through the twilight. Sentinels paced the pavement before the house, and soldiers as well as civilians crowded the stairway, some seeking ingress to, others egress from the building. It was the mansion of the Sous-Prefect, with whom Napoleon had taken his abode. The man in the cloak ascended the stairs and stepped into the hall with the assurance of a man who knows his way and feels at home. Turning to the left, he entered a small apartment, which looked like the office of a porter or similar menial. It was occupied by an elderly man, who rose and respectfully greeted the visitor.

"Is your master at home?" inquired the latter, in a hurried voice.

"He is, monsieur; but he is engaged, and—"

"Never mind, he is not engaged to me. Take this card to him, and report at once. I shall await your return in this room."

He wrote a few words on the back of his card, and handed it to the servant who carried it to his master. In a few minutes he reappeared, and informed the visitor that his master was ready to receive him. Then leading him up stairs, he ushered him into a room, the double doors of which he closed behind him. The man in the cloak found himself in a large and elegant apartment occupied by a single person, who had evidently awaited him, for on his visitor's appearance, he stepped forward and said with a mixture of politeness and impatience:

"Ah! Monsieur Dupre: what gives me the pleasure of your company to-night?"

The visitor smiled.

"You say pleasure and mean annoyance," he said. "I know very well that you are busy; but my business is so important that I could not spare you the interruption."

"Indeed? Well. let me hear then."

"As soon as we have seated ourselves. You value your time —I value my strength which has been greatly impaired by the war."

The other suppressed a gesture of impatience. Inviting his visitor to a chair, and taking one himself, he said:

"As you please, monsieur. If the war has impaired your strength, it has at least sharpened your humor. You are on the best way of becoming a "bel-esprit." But now, having complied with your request: will you do me the favor of stating the nature of your errand without delay."

"Certainly, and with pleasure. I want nothing more and nothing less than the head of an accursed Bavarian."

The host jumped from his chair.

"Are you mad?" he exclaimed.

"Not to my knowledge," the other replied, coolly.

"Then you are making sport of me."

"I wouldn't venture on such a liberty."

"Then what the deuce do you mean by such a funny request."

"I assure you I see nothing funny in it."

"Then explain. At present it looks like the production of a crazy brain."

"You'll understand it in a minute. Do you recollect a conspiracy, which occurred in Paris, in '67, and in which many of our first families were implicated."

"I do, monsieur. Proceed, proceed!"

"I am going as fast as I can. Do you recollect that one of the conspirators, a Bavarian, shot a policeman who endeavored to arrest him."

"I do, I do; but these are old affairs: what have they to do with your visit?"

"A good deal, monsieur; as you will perceive, when you learn that this self-same Bavarian is now a prisoner in our hands."

The other shook his head.

"I must confess, I am as much in the dark as ever," he said. "What is this Bavarian to you or me, *now*, I pray you? Havn't we enough trouble on hand, without opening old sores? Come, now, stop firing at random: I am fully prepared to meet the real issue."

"But monsieur wrongs me. I am in earnest when I demand this fellow's head. What would you say, if I told you that this man suffered himself to be captured, in order to conspire anew against our illustrious master?"

A derisive smile passed over the other's face.

"I would say that it is a very pretty story, and lacks only the important circumstance that it is not true."

"You don't believe it?"

"No."

"And why not?"

"Because it is improbable."

"Oh, improbable stories are not always fictitious. I could tell you one about a certain friend and adviser of the emperor, whom the people accuse of embezzling millions of the army-fund. That sounds improbable, does it not? And yet it is true, and can be proved."

The host turned deadly pale.

"What do you mean? You do not insinuate—" he stammered.

"I only mean that I must have the head of this Bavarian. I

was good-natured enough to furnish you a plausible story for that purpose; but you dislike stories, and so I desist. Story or no story, however: if you don't wish certain documents to make the round of the camp you must place the order for his execution into my hands before nine o'clock to-morrow morning."

The host struggled violently for the preservation of his self-command. At last he said:

"And you refuse to give me the true reason for your blood-thirsty demand?"

"Your question contains an insult," he said with an ugly sneer. "Can you not elevate yourself to the position of a citizen who sacrifises his own tranquility for the good of his country?"

The other made a gesture of impatience, and said:

"What is the name of your victim?"

"In Paris he went by the name of Le Brun; in Nancy, however I learned that the army know him as Lieutenant Miller."

"Then we must arrest him as Le Brun. But can you prove the identity of that Le Brun with this Miller?"

"I can and will, Sir."

"It is well, monsieur. Come to me at nine to-morrow morning, and I shall see what can be done."

"You are very slow, monsieur. Can you not quicken the process a little."

"I cannot, Sir. We must go through the forms of a trial, at least. I am not almighty, and the emperor will not sign the death-warrant unless the regular process of law is observed. The question is, whether he will sign it at all in his present frame of mind."

"He must!" said Dupre with emphasis.

"You are very bold and confident," retorted the other, bitterly. "Beware that you do not fall into the snare which you lay for another."

"An occurrence which, no doubt, would please your excellency well, as it would rid you of a troublesome monitor. However, I thank you for the warning, and assure you that I shall not neglect to act on it."

With these words he saluted the other, and left the room. The host clenched his fist and shook it after him.

"Viper!" he muttered. "Could I but crush you under my feet! Why was I so silly to use as a tool and not destroy it afterwards? The wise man breaks the bowl in which he prepared his poison. I left mine entire, fool that I was! But must this be? Is there no chance of saving a life which this monster wishes to destroy, probably for reasons of revenge? Could I not manage to let the prisoner escape? No, no! That would incense Dupre against me, and induce him to spring his mine before my counter-mine is ready. Just wait a little, my good friend, and you will be glad to relinquish the grasp with which you have held me so long. Until then, patience! I would save this fellow if I could; but if you must drink his blood—drink it, for all I care. What does it amount to, after all? Justice was cheated out of her dues in '67 and is entitled to capital and interest in '70. She shall have it. When I have to choose between this fellow's life and my own reputation, I surely cannot hesitate. But woe to thee, Monsieur Dupre! Thou playest a bold game. Watch thy cards, or I shall send thee after thy victim before thou knowest it."

Slowly the night passed by; slowly for the restless emperor, the scheming minister, the plotting clerk, and the shivering prisoners. When the sun rose in the morning, scattering before his powerful rays the drizzling rain, and gradually lighting up the area of the court, the prisoners yielded to his reviving influence, and looked on their situation with more cheerful eyes. True, they were prisoners; but did not the Germans hold thousands of captives for every one of which the French could boast? Would not their friends make an effort to have them exchanged as soon as possible? Their greatest vexation consisted in the apprehension that their release would be too late for a participation in the victorious march upon the capital and the laurels to be gathered on that occasion.

While they exchanged views on these and other subjects, their breakfast was brought them, consisting, like their supper, of bread and water. When they asked for a larger supply of the latter for washing purposes, they were informed that the bucket furnished them was all that could be spared, and that they must make it answer for both purposes. This led to comical exclamations and practical jokes, and the simple meal passed off more

cheerfully than the circumstances seemed to warrant. It was soon over, however, and then the greatest enemy of prison-life, tediousness, began to prey upon the men. They had nothing to occupy either mind or body. The dingy walls surrounding them offered a dreary aspect for the eye; nor were the few curious faces peeping through the bars of the gate, much more attractive. Slowly the time wore away, and the prisoners judged, from the height of the sun, that the tenth hour had arrived, when, all at once, an unusual bustle at the gate attracted their attention. The gate opened, and a corporal with six soldiers marched into the court. They approached the prisoners and halted in their immediate neighborhood.

"Who of you is Monsieur Miller?" the corporal addressed them.

The two friends exchanged a significant glance.

"My foreboding!" muttered Schultze. "I knew the rascal would be after you."

"Come, come, messieurs! answer me!" said the corporal, impatiently. "We have no time to lose: who of you goes by the name of Miller?"

Miller now rose from the bundle on which he had been sitting, and the others followed his example.

"My name is Miller," he replied. "What do you want of me?"

"I have the order to take you to head-quarters. Have the goodness to follow me."

"I knew it! I knew it!" Schultze exclaimed, half sadly, half angrily. "That rascal will not rest until he kills you."

"I hope it isn't so bad as that," said Miller, consolingly. "At all events, I'll have to humor the wishes of this gentleman. Good-bye, Schultze, good-bye, comrades! Be of good cheer, until we meet again."

"Can I accompany my friend?" Schultze inquired of the corporal.

"I can take nobody but Monsieur Miller."

"Oh God! I knew it, I knew it!" cried the poor fellow, covering his face with his hands and yielding to the feelings of the moment. "I shall never see you again, Robert."

"Yes, you will, August," replied Miller, touched by the other's affection. "This is merely a matter of form. They will not suf-

for this enemy of mine to carry out his petty revenge. Depend upon it, you will see me again before the morning has passed away. Good-bye, my friend: do not give these fellows the satisfaction of sneering at your weakness."

Schultze pressed his hand; but his heart was too full for utterance. He turned aside, while the soldiers took Miller into their midst and led him away. The other prisoners shared his emotion. They all loved the young officer, and his removal deprived the sun of his warming and cheerful influence. The uncertain destiny of their comrade hung like a heavy cloud over their spirits, and the balance of the day was spent in despondency and mournful reflection.

In the meantime, the prisoner was marched through the streets, and became again the target for the sneers, the abuse, and the missiles of the mob. The soldiers did their best to protect him, while he himself responded to the invectives merely by a derisive smile. The open contempt of the prisoner, however, irritated the mob more than the bitterest retorts would have done; and the corporal seemed to become seriously alarmed for his safety. He ordered the soldiers to quicken their steps, and felt evidently relieved, when they reached the mansion of the Sous-Prefect. Miller was led into the hall, and then ushered into an apartment, where a number of officers sat around an oblong table. The soldiers withdrew to the hall, leaving Miller alone in the presence of his judges. That the officers sat there in that capacity, his practised eye discerned at once. There were seven in all, and their grave appearance showed that they were conscious of the responsibility resting upon them. After an impressive silence, one of the officers, apparently the oldest, addressed the prisoner:

"Monsieur, you call yourself Miller?"

"Miller is my name."

"If that is so, it is my painful duty to inform you that you are charged with the grave offences of high-treason and murder, and that my brother-officers and myself have been constituted a court-martial to try you. Listen to the specification of the charges preferred against you."

The president of the court then proceeded to read a paper, which contained, in legal terms, the detail of the accusation with

which we are already familiar. After he had finished, he summoned the prisoner before the bar to declare whether he confessed himself *guilty* or *not guilty*. Miller answered evasively.

"Before I answer your question," he said, "I should like to test the validity of your right to try me. To judge from appearances this is a military court, a tribunal which can hardly have jurisdiction over an old offense, foreign to this war."

"Then you acknowledge the justice of the charge?"

"I acknowledge nothing. I find it strange that Monsieur should turn a denial into an acknowledgment."

"*Eh bien!* Your denial will do you little good. Martial law having been proclaimed in Sedan, all offences, no matter whether old or new, belong properly before a military court. I do not want to take undue advantage of you, and therefore request you to examine this paper, which contains our appointment as judges for this case."

Miller perused the paper in silence and then handed it back.

"Are you now ready to answer my previous question?" the president resumed. "Are you guilty or not guilty of the charge?"

"Not guilty."

"Then it becomes our duty to prove our charges. Monsieur le capitaine, please to elicit the truth by examining the prisoner."

The officer addressed turned to Miller and inquired:

"Did you reside at Paris in the year of our Lord 1867?"

"I refuse to answer."

"And why?"

"Because I prefer not to criminate myself."

"Did you ever go by the name of Le Brun."

"I regret that I am compelled to reply as before."

"You are wrong to be stubborn, Monsieur. Obstinacy can only aggravate your case. We are prepared to prove our charges by witnesses."

"Why then waste time in asking useless questions?"

"Oh well! if you can dispense with our leniency, you shall be accommodated. Monsieur le capitaine, produce your testimony."

The captain opened the door of an adjoining room, and introduced a person in whom Miller at once recognized the mysterious stranger. It was the first time he saw him so near by, and

a feeling of repugnance and hatred arose in his mind at the thought that this stranger pursued him so relentlessly, and, to his knowledge, so entirely without cause. The stranger avoided his glance, bowing to the court as he entered, and looking steadily at the president.

"Monsieur," that officer addressed him, "have the goodness to step this way, in order to be sworn. We need your testimony in this case."

The new comer obeyed the summons and a minute afterwards the oath had been administered.

"Now, state your name," said the president.

"My name is Alcibiades Dupre."

On hearing that name, a light of recognition shot through Miller's mind. *Now* he knew where to place the man, and he almost suffered an "ah" to escape his lips. One thing, however, continued to puzzle him: he had never injured this Dupre; why then did the fellow hate him so?

This, however, was not the time for reflection. The president began to speak again, and the prisoner listened in the greatest suspense.

"Were you in Paris in 1867 ?"

"I was, Sir."

"Did you then know a certain person going by the name of Le Brun?"

"I did, Sir."

"Robert Le Brun?"

"Robert Le Brun."

"Would you know him on seeing him?"

"I would."

"Are you sure?"

"Very sure."

"Look around: do you see him in this room?"

Dupre let his eyes wander over the room, and when they lit upon the prisoner's face, the latter imagined he saw a savage satisfaction shine forth from them. Without hesitating a moment, Dupre pointed to Miller and said:

"That man is Robert Le Brun."

"That is sufficient, Monsieur Dupre. Captain, have you any other witnesses?"

"I have," said the captain, and, opening the adjoining room, introduced an aged officer who wore the uniform of the imperial guards. On being sworn, he was asked whether he knew the prisoner before the bar.

To this he replied affirmatively.

"Where did you see him?" the president inquired.

"In Paris."

"When?"

"In 1867."

"Can you give us his name?"

"Monsieur Robert Le Brun."

This testimony was overwhelming. Miller read in the miens of his judges, that they were fully convinced of his identity. His heart sank within him, and he began to consider his case desperate in the extreme. From these reflections he was startled by the voice of the president.

"Gentlemen of the court," he addressed his colleagues, "the identity of the prisoner with Robert Le Brun was the only thing in the case to be established. I have here a certified copy of the trial in which Robert Le Brun was found guilty of high-treason and murder in the first degree. Either of these charges is amenable by death; but it remains for this court to decide whether the law shall have its course. Corporal, take the prisoner from the presence of this court, that it may deliberate on his case."

The corporal motioned to the prisoner, and Miller, deeming any effort at resistance idle, suffered himself to be conducted from the room. He knew that his destiny was sealed, and that the court would pronounce him guilty. He knew that, in such a case, certain death would be his fate, and that only the time and mode of his execution would leave room for speculation. Now, to say that these reflections had nothing horrible to our friend, would be an untruth. We are all fond of life, and ill-prepared to meet a sudden death; but if this death assumes the fearful shape of the guillotine or, at best, the bullet, we are apt to view it with increased horror. Miller was sorely tried: his fortitude had never stood so severe a test before; but we must at the

same time record it to his credit that he came out victorious. Nor was it the stoical indifference to results which upheld him: he was, on the other hand, fully determined to struggle to the bitter end. The court might possibly sentence him to immediate execution; but of this he was not much afraid, since even the shortest court-martial generally allows its culprits a day or two of grace. If this time was accorded to him, he would use his hands as well as his brains for his liberation and succeed or perish in the attempt. Thus fortified and prepared for every exigency, he was enabled to show a calmness and unconcern which certainly disappointed his enemies, if they had expected to see him tremble or appeal to their mercy. The guard maintained a considerate silence, and on their solemn faces the prisoner thought to read their opinion concerning the issue of his trial.

The deliberations of the court were very short. Ten minutes had hardly elapsed, when the corporal was summoned to produce the prisoner. The faces of the judges were, if anything, more solemn than before, and an oppressive silence reigned in the room. This silence was at last broken by the judge, who said:

"Robert Le Brun, alias Robert Miller, this court has duly and carefully considered the charges of which you stand accused, and, after such due and careful consideration, has found you guilty. It becomes now my painful duty to pronounce over the sentence with which the law punishes the crimes of which you stand convicted. You shall be led hence into prison and remain there twenty-four hours, which respite we grant you to prepare your soul for the meeting with your Maker. After the expiration of that time of grace, you shall be led from your prison upon the rampart and shot to death by a dozen soldiers, to be selected for that service by special order, after which your body shall be interred on the place of execution. Is there any cause why this sentence should not be executed? If so, speak, or hereafter hold your peace."

A derisive smile played around Miller's lips.

"There is a cause," he said, calmly; "but this cause affects *you* not *me*. I do not reflect on the motives of this court; on the contrary, I believe its members honorable men, or I would not

address them as I do. I repeat that I do not impugn their motives; but I have my grave suspicions that they lent themselves hastily and unthinkingly to a action which, on due reflection, they must find incompatibe with their honor."

"Yes, with their *honor*," he repeated, when he discovered signs of indignation on the faces of the officers. "Or do you really imagine to serve the interests of your country and of justice by sitting in judgment over me in this hour of your national trial? Are you so blind as not to see that you are mere tools in the hands of an unscrupulous scoundrel, who persecutes me with a hatred whose intensity is only surpassed by its causelessness? Do not believe that I say this for the purpose of securing an alteration of your verdict. I know very well that a false sense of honor forbids you to undo a step which in itself violates the principles of honor. Still, I could not refrain from speaking, because by doing so I take my only chance of revenge. My words will sink like daggers into your conscience, and sink more deeply the more you try to forget them. Gentlemen, I have done. May you never be doomed to die the death to which you have so readily condemned a fellow-soldier at the instigation of a rogue. Farewell!"

On stepping from the room, he noticed the blush of shame or indignation on more than one cheek. He also saw how Dupre made an attempt to speak to several; but how they invariably turned their backs to him, and showed by their conduct that they felt the justice of Miller's parting remarks. In the hall, the prisoner was again surrounded by the soldiers, who conducted him to the second story of a neighboring prison, where a narrow cell with an iron door and heavy bars of the same material in the only window, received him. No sooner was he alone, than he began to examine every feature of his prison, in the hope of discovering an avenue through which his escape might possibly be effected. He tried the strength of the door; he shook the window-bars with all the strength at his disposal; but neither door nor bars would betray the slightest symptom of decay or weakness. He knocked against the walls, the floor, the ceiling, watching with the keenest attention for something indicative of hol-

lowness or thinness; but his raps elicited nothing but the dull and heavy sound drawn from solid masonry.

Miller continued these investigations for over an hour, until at last his limbs ached and the blood oozed from several bruises on his hands and fingers. Then seeing the uselessness of further efforts, he sank on the couch which his cell contained, and, for a while, yielded to the despondency so natural under the circumstances.

"Father, thou art avenged," he murmured to himself. "I thought to atone by offering my life for my country's cause on the field of battle; but little did I dream to die by the hand of the executioner. But it will have to be, I suppose, and I merely reap in bitter sorrow what I sowed in folly. Nobody can escape his destiny; so I shall try to bear mine like a man. Nemesis, receive thy victim!"

CHAPTER XV.

We left Alcibiades Dupre in the court-room, trying to explain to the officers the injustice of the prisoner's charges. We saw how they turned their backs upon him, thereby indicating the estimation in which they held a man who had forced upon them so revolting a task. These open manifestations of contempt of course stung him to the quick; but they could but little mar the savage joy which he felt at the successful issue of his intrigue. He left the mansion and followed Miller at a distance, in order to ascertain the situation of his prison, and watch the faithful execution of the sentence with a jealous eye. When the heavy door of the stronghold closed upon his unhappy victim, he drew a deep breath of relief. He knew that Miller was safe there for the present, and that he could turn his attention to other matters which engaged his mind with equal vivacity.

Alcibiades Dupre is no longer the man whose acquaintance we made at Froschweiler, at the beginning of the war. *Then* he was one of those indifferent beings, below rather than above medioc-

rity, who wend their way through life without giving or attracting much attention. Dull of comprehension, low in his tastes, inacessible to noble impulses, he had challenged the compassion of some, and the contempt of others, while a few sycophants and parasites, anxious to live on his father's bounty, extolled his qualities and praised virtues in whose existence they were the last to believe.

No one, however, had any idea of the dangerous qualities lying dormant in this man. Some philosophers have advocated the theory that the character of the different brute-species is repeated in man. If this is correct, Alcibiades Dupre was the faithful counterpart of the tiger. True, society had filed his teeth and trimmed his claws; but it had forgotten that time and growth restore the original sharpness of such weapons and that a tamed tiger remains nothing but a tiger, after all. As long as everything had gone smoothly with Monsieur Dupre, he had behaved himself well enough; but no sooner did his wishes, inclinations and designs come into hostile contact with those of others, than his natural ferocity awoke. We have already noticed an indication of his real character on the occasion of his interview with his cousin Pauline, for whom he then felt the only passion of which he was conscious. The war had developed other and worse passions since. It was his true element, the hot-bed in which the germs of his numerous vices sprouted and grew with a rapidity and vigor, truly marvelous. Or perhaps not marvelous either. The natural condition of the tiger is war; he wars upon his prey, and grows up in constant hostility with all the world. Need we wonder then that the human tiger thrives under circumstances so well adapted to his nature?

Dupre had, from the beginning, experienced a savage satisfaction at the frighful destruction of life and property which had followed in the wake of the warring hosts. He had, to his best ability, assisted in increasing this destruction, and killed and robbed, where this could be done with impunity. His interview with the minister at the mansion of the Sous-Prefect shows also, that he had assisted in stealing the millions which filled the pockets of ministers and contractors, but tapped the strength of the

French armies and rendered them powerless to resist the onset of their enemies.

His love for Pauline Delmont had not abated; on the contrary, it had become a furious passion, in keeping with the general ferocity, newly acquired. Closely connected with this passion was the savage hatred which he bore to Robert Miller. Love, especially rejected love, sharpens the eyes and wits of the dullest, and jealousy preys upon the obtuse as fiercely as upon the cunning. Nor can it be denied that Alcibiades Dupre was cunning in a certain way. He possessed that brutal sagacity which nature gives even to those animals whose stupidity has become a by-word.

His hatred of Miller dated from '67. Perhaps he had seen his cousin's eyes dwell with too much ardor upon the face of the handsome German; perhaps he had even overheard their conversation on the eve of the memorable masquerade: however that may be, we know for certain that Dupre's persecution of Miller dated from that moment. He had failed in Havre to secure his arrest; but the fact that his rival had been compelled to leave France, with no prospect of an early return, had in a measure allayed his jealousy and increased the zeal with which he pushed his suit. Love is ennobling under all circumstances, and if Pauline Delmont had returned his affection, the tiger in him might have remained asleep, and his teeth and claws remained harmless. For this we do not mean to blame Miss Delmont. We are all of us free agents, and the non-fulfilment of our wishes is a miserable subterfuge for our depravity.

We know that Dupre had received a clerk-ship in the commissariat. His duties had called him to Metz, where he would probably have remained, if the battle of Gravelotte had not foreshadowed an investment of the fortress. Leaving it just in season to avoid the approaching Germans, he hastened to Nancy, which city he found already in their possession. However, as it is an open place, it was not subject to the restrictions of a fortress, and nothing prevented the runaway clerk from instituting those researches, to make which he had come to Nancy.

His father owned a fine estate in the neighborhood of Nancy, and he conjectured naturally, that his relations would seek this nearest asylum in case the battle should have made the villa of

Froschweiler untenable. We know that this conjecture was correct, but we have still to learn, how he found them and what occasioned their rapid departure.

It was on the evening of Miller's visit at the villa, half an hour after his departure, that Dupre suddenly burst into the house and, by his unexpected appearance, startled and frightened the ladies. His clothes were wet and soiled, mud spots covering both pantaloons and overcoat. His boots were thickly covered with yellow clay, as if he had lost his way and tramped regardlessly through field and garden. His hat had disappeared and his hair hung in dishevelled masses around a face of deadly paleness. Only the eyes sparkled with such a feverish brilliancy that both the ladies could not help breaking into exclamations of surprise and inquiries as to the cause of his excitement and condition. To these inquiries he replied evasively, ignoring his own person and merely informing them that a German officer had been fired upon in the neighborhood, and that, in consequence, it would be impossible for them to remain in the house. Troops would surely be there in half an hour, he said, to sack the place and revenge the attempt on the guilty and the innocent. He would therefore get the carriage ready without delay; for, thanks to his haste, he had gained enough of a start to elude the immediate pursuit of the Germans.

What should the ladies do? Miss Aspasia received every word of her beloved and admired nephew as gospel-truth; but although Miss Delmont had grave doubts as to the motives of her cousin, and plainly hinted her suspicion of his being implicated in the nefarious attack on the officer, she yielded for the simple reason that she lacked the power of resisting. She did not doubt the story of the firing; nor had she any reason to discredit Dupre's predictions concerning the fearful vengeance which the Germans were likely to take on the neigborhood. So, yielding to necessity, she obeyed his injunctions and entered the carriage with a heavy sigh. This sigh, was it heaved on account of again exchanging the comforts of a home for an uncertain future; or on account of him whom she had so lately entertained at that home? She probably did not know herself; but she *did* know that she

was miserable and longed for the moment, when the turmoil of war would cease and peace be reinstated in its ancient rights.

Their journey was at once both perilous and fatiguing. Fleeing before the rapid columns of the Germans, and avoiding the omnipotent Uhlans only with the greatest difficulty, they finally reached Chalons, where they met Dupre the elder, greatly reduced in bulk by the hardships of war, but delighted to see friends and relations whom he had almost given up as lost. At Chalons the family remained until McMahon evacuated the town and began his famous march on Sedan. Then they parted, Dupre the younger remaining in Chalons to transact some important business, the rest accompanying, or rather, heading the army and stopping at Bazailles, where Dupre owned a beautiful mansion on the outskirts of the village. Arriving there, they drew a deep breath of relief, anticipating the renewal of domestic comfort, and dreaming little of the new trials in store for them; little of the calamities compared with which the past ones were trifles. In this villa they remained until the morning of the first of September, when the shells of the Germans began to fall in an alarming proximity. For several days they had hoped against hope. Now and then the false report of a French victory revived their drooping spirits, and nothing but the Prussian shells were capable of convincing them that the last army of France had been beaten and was then engaged in a retreat which the slightest panic would unavoidably change into a rout.

The sun of the first had hardly risen on the unfortunate village, when the disappearance of the servants indicated that state of affairs which we designate by the term of anarchy. The bell was rung in vain. No servant-girl appeared to set the table; no coachman to prepare the carriage for a hasty retreat to Sedan. Monsieur Dupre had to take the latter office upon himself. It was a laborious task for the fat little man, and the perspiration ran profusely over his face, before he succeeded in hitching a horse before the light barouche which, on former occasions, had mediated the intercourse between Sedan and Bazailles. He mounted the box and was on the point of driving from the shed into the open court, when all at once a peculiar whiz in the air caused the horse to start and rise repeatedly on its hind feet.

Now, a practical and coureageous driver would perhaps have managed the animal; and even Mr. Dupre might have shown himself equal to the emergency, if a second shell had not, immediately afterwards, aggravated the situation by making its appearance. This second shell, not content with sounding its pleasant "whiz" struck a stable and exploded into a thousand fragments. This was too much for the self-possession of the horse. Taking the bit between his teeth, he cleared the yard with a few mighty bounds, and then started on a race, which must soon take the vehicle to Sedan, provided it escape the numerous perils which present themselves at every step. Here is a broken ambulance; there a crowd of fugitives, a battery, a provision train; and Monsieur Dupre, in view of such obstacles, despairs of the possibility of evading them, and, in a short prayer, recommends his soul to Heaven. But the horse achieves what his master would have spoiled. Taking fortunately a by-road, less frequented and consequently less obstructed, and troubling himself very little about the legitimacy of the route pursued, he stops after the incredibly short period of fifteen minutes at the gate of Sedan.

Before we follow the further movements of Dupre pere, let us go back a few hours, and see what has become of his worthy son. After gazing with satisfaction at the strong prison in which his rival was to spend his day of grace, Alcibiades had turned his steps towards the house which belonged to the family and was used as their residence during the short visits which they, now and then, paid the dull town. It was occupied by two servants, and, to judge from Alcibiades' opening remarks, he had been there shortly before.

"Have the ladies come, Jean?" he inquired eagerly.

"No, monsieur; they have not."

"And my father?"

"Haint seen no sign of His Honor."

"The deuce take him!" was Alcibiades' unfilial wish. "Where can he be? Where can they all be? If they aint here early tomorrow morning, Jean, we'll have to go out and hunt them."

"But the bomb-shells, Monsieur Alcibiades?"

"Oh! never mind the bomb-shells, Jean; they have too much

to do, to waste their time on such a useless rascal as you. But see here, Jean: have you any rum in the cellar?"

"No, Sir; but there are several bottles of good old cognac."

"That will answer as well; so go and get a couple of bottles. In the meantime, Jeannette can get me something to eat; for I must confess that I am as hungry as a wolf."

The servant hastened to do his bidding, and soon some cold victuals with a bottle of cognac stood on the table, awaiting the attack which Alcibiades was evidently eager to begin. After he had finished his meal, he said:

"Jean, I havn't slept for two nights, and must take a nap before I attend to any new business. Is there a bed ready in the house?"

"Yes, Sir. You'll find a bed ready in the brown room."

"Very well, you watch in the meantime, and waken me in case my father comes. Don't you bother me for any trifling nonsense, though."

"Aye, aye!" responded the servant, and Dupre withdrew to the indicated room, where he soon sank into such a sleep as a vigil of forty-eight hours is apt to produce. He slept through the balance of the day, and through the hours of evening, and the servants, meeting with nothing that seemed to require his attention, retired to bed themselves, leaving him in a state of total oblivion likely to continue until morning. Indeed the first gray of dawn stole through the Venetian blinds, when Dupre opened his eyes and looked around with that bewildered stare which at first fails to recognize the whereabouts. All at once, however, he seemed to comprehend; for he jumped from the bed, and after arranging his clothes, which he had kept on all night, stepped to the door and called for Jean. The groom soon made his appearance, rubbing his eyes and inquiring in a sleepy tone of voice for his master's wishes.

"It must be late, Jean, is it not? I slept longer than I intended."

"No, Sir, it aint very late," replied Jean with a broad grin. "I should call it rather early."

"What do you mean, blockhead? Practice your wit upon somebody else. What time is it?"

Before Jean could answer, he stepped to the window and looked at his watch.

"Seven o'clock," he said. "Why that *is* early, to be sure. Is Jeannette geiting supper ready? I feel like eating again."

"Why, Monsieur Alcibiades, Jeannette can't well get supper, considerin' it aint evening, but morning."

"Morning, you dunce? You don't mean to say that I have slept all night?"

"Indeed you have, though," said Jean with his broadest grin.

"And why didn't you waken me, blockhead?"

"Because I didn't fancy having my ears pulled. Your Honor said we shouldn't bother you, and so we didn't."

"Well, well, it makes no odds. Your stupidity has done no harm, this time. But now bestir yourselves! Kindle a fire and get breakfast ready without delay. I have a thousand things to do this morning, and cannot begin any too soon. Begone, begone!"

Jean seemed to stand in wholesome awe of his master, for he fairly flew and inspired Jeannette with his own commendable zeal. Thirty minutes later a good breakfast stood before Monsieur Dupre, who again developed a good appetite, although he ate with that abstracted air which shows that our mind is wandering. When he was through, the clock on the mantle-piece struck eight. The lateness of the hour seemed to alarm him, for he jumped up and said:

"Eight o'clock! By George, that will never do! I must make up for lost time by making things fly. Jean have you got a horse in the stable?"

"Yes, Sir. Horses are plenty in town. You canhave them for the biddin'."

"Well, get one ready and put it to the light spring-wagon. I am going upon a short errand, and when I return I expect to find everything ready."

Dupre left the house and turned his steps towards the prison, where the object of his hatred was confined. He knew the strength of the place and had no definite suspicion that Miller could or would escape; yet he drew a breath of relief, when he learned that every thing was right and the culprit in safe keep-

ing. He left the prison without delay and had traversed half the distance to his house, when all at once he heard his name called, and, on turning, discovered his father, sitting alone in a barouche and driving towards the side-walk to greet his son.

"Why, Alcibiades! is it possible! How in the world—

"Yes exactly: how in the world did you get here?" interrupted Dupre jun. snappishly. "Where did you leave the ladies? What has become of them?"

"They are at Bazailles, Alcibiades."

"And you left them there, without any projection?"

"Well, allow me to explain, my son. I had hitched this rascally horse to the back door to take the ladies in, when a bomb-shell came flying with its ugly "whiz, whiz" and caused this fellow to prance in fine style. Still—"

"A bomb-shell, you say?" exclaimed his son in consternation Are the Prussians so close upon Bazailles?"

„They are indeed, Alcibiades. I should'nt wonder, if, by this time, they had taken it entirely."

"And under those circumstances you left the women? Father, I marvel at you."

"But, my son, listen to my explanation. A second bomb-shell—"

„Never mind your story now. Let me jump in and drive back to Bazailles. Perhaps we will be in time to save them."

"But Alcibiades, this confounded rascal of a beast wont go. I could'nt manage him at all, I tell you."

"No doubt, Sir,"was the derisive reply. "But depend upon it, *I* shall manage him. Make room, I tell you."

"No, no Alcibiades, I intend to get down first to give you a better chance. I am tired of the capers of this confounded beast, Sir."

"Well, come down then at once" said the Alcibiades with undisguised contempt. "Perhaps I'll do better without you. Go to the house and tell the servants to get everything ready for our arrival. I shall fetch the women even if all the demons in creation are in league with the Prussians."

During these remarks, Dupre the father had descended from the barouche, and Dupre the son taken his place. No sooner

had the latter seized hold of the reins, when he applied the whip to the back of the horse and made him start with a velocity truly alarming to the affectionate father.

"Fine boy!" he muttered to himself. "He'll teach him, how to run away, I bet you. But these shells, these ugly shells! They are rude customers and no mistake. I hope they wont harm him though, nor the women either; indeed I do. But now let us go home and see, how Jean and his better half are faring, and whether they have anything decent to eat. This horrible ride has given me a keen appetite."

While he wends his way through the confusion and disorder which the approaching struggle had created in the town, let us follow Alcibiades, as he urges his steed with a skilled and steady hand towards the village of Bazailles. The roads had not improved since the morning, but so great was the advantage which skill and strength gave the son over the father, that all obstacles were avoided, and the village reached in a short time with entire safety. There seemed to be a lull in the gigantic struggle. True, a cannon-shot now and then shook the air, seconded by the cracks of a desultory musketry fire; but compared with the usual uproar of battle, the situation could be termed a tranquil one. On arriving at the villa, Alcibiades drove into an open shed and, after tying the horse, hastened to the dwelling to learn what had become of his aunt and cousin. The house, however, seemed totally deserted, for in vain did Dupre hasten through the rooms of the different stories. Greatly discouraged he returned to the hall and was on the point of leaving the building, when he thought of raising his voice, in orders to see, whether, in that way, he could draw a sign of life from the lost ones.

The attempt proved successful. No sooner had the echo of his voice died away, when a faint response from the cellar rewarded his perseverance. He hastened to the cellar-door and called again, and this time the response was more distinct than before. Dupre descended the steps and soon had the satisfaction of discovering the two missing ones in the act of obeying his call. Aspasia embraced him with great fervor and thanked him with the profusion of language peculiar to the worthy dame. Pauline also was evidently glad to be delivered from her damp

Ruins of Bazaille.

prison; but she expressed her satisfaction in terms so cold and measured, that they exercised a chilling influence upon her cousin. He told them to hurry up, since the present lull was likely to be of short duration. If the present opportunity was lost, he said, they might wait in vain for another.

His admonitions quickened the motions of the women; but no sooner had they reached the ground-floor, when the boom of cannon, the crack of musketry, and the shouts of thousands of excited combatants announced the renewal of the conflict, and preached to them the necessity of dispatch with the most impressive eloquence. The ladies handed Dupre a pair of bundles containing the most indispensable articles of clothing, and the trio were on the point of leaving, when repeated blows against the front door became audible. At the same time, the yard behind the house resounded with the din of battle showing the fugitives that their line of retreat was imperiled. The ladies stood paralyzed; but Dupre, in whom the uproar of battle seemed to awaken a savage satisfaction, evinced no sign of fear. He hastened to a front window, in order to catch a glimpse of the situation. What he saw was not very encouraging. Dense masses of Germans came pouring down the street, pressing upon the French, who fell back, scattering in the houses and keeping up from there a desultory fire upon their assailants. The blows against the door originated with them; but when Dupre unlocked the door to let them in, they had disappeared. A bullet sent through the aperture and grazing his shoulder, taught him the danger of his situation, and induced him to relock the door. At the same time, however, it roused his anger, and increased the excitement into which the uproar of the battle had thrown him. Watching the progress of the battle from a window, he was seized with an indomitable fury at the steady progress of the Germans. His eyes sparkled fiercely; his teeth gnashed; his hand clenched, and involuntarily his looks wandered around the room in search of a weapon, by the use of which he might give vent to his feelings. They had not to go far: there on the wall hung the rifles and fowling-pieces which, in more peaceful days, had often accompanied him on his hunting expeditions. To see them and seize a rifle was the work of a moment. Dupre was no longer master

of his actions. His passions had overpowered his judgment, and in leveling the gun at the enemy he merely yielded to the savage, bloodthirsty disposition which formed one of the chief elements of his character. He felt as in a delirium. His hands jerked, and he could not have kept his finger from the trigger, if his life had depended on the action. The fatal movement was performed, the bullet sped on its way and pierced the heart of a brave German officer who marched at the head of his men, animating them by word and action. But his death was not the only consequence of the shot. The shattered pane, the little cloud of smoke betrayed to the assailants the position of the shooter, and a yell of rage conveyed to him the intelligence of his discovery. A moment later every window in the house was riddled by bullets, and the assault commenced. Frightened at the consequences of his rash deed, Dupre threw the rifle into a corner, and rushed to the place where he had left his helpless companions.

"Come, come!" he cried with frantic eagerness; "if they find us here we are lost."

Paying no further attention to the bundles, he led the way to the back-door and hurried down a flight of stairs into the yard. The place was empty then, and, for a moment, Dupre entertained the hope of being able to reach the carriage and effect his escape. Soon, however, he discovered his mistake; for not only did the enraged Germans penetrate from both sides into the yard, but the house also had been taken in the twinkling of an eye, and through its back-door a stream of infuriated pursuers began to pour. At the sight of the fugitives, fifty muskets were simultaneously discharged at them; but, thanks to the excitement of the men, not a single bullet took effect. It stopped the flight of the trio, however; Dupre and Pauline facing their pursuers, and Aspasia throwing herself on her knees and imploring their mercy. This, however, might have been of little avail; for several muskets had already been raised to dispatch the supplicant as well as her companions, when the arrival of an officer secured them a momentary respite.

"What is this?" the new-comer cried authoritatively. "Are

you not ashamed, men, to slaughter women? Back with you and let them go."

"But they fired upon us from the house and killed our captain."

"Not these women, I presume. At any rate, do not kill them now, but take them to the rear and give them a fair trial. Come, lads, let us be off, or our comrades will out-distance us and be in Sedan before we know it."

The men cheered, and drove their prisoners with words and blows into the main street. There a sad sight met their eyes. The body of the dead captain was carried to the rear, and, at the sight of their beloved officer, the men were seized with a new frenzy of rage. They, once more, turned upon their prisoners, and only the command of the superior officer, which, at that moment, called the soldiers to their ranks, saved them from certain destruction.

I need not inform the reader that we have already witnessed this moment of deliverance. He has before this discovered that yon culprits in the battle of Bazailles, and the victims of the present dilemma, are the same persons. We left them then on their way to Sedan, and consequently can now proceed to chronicle their safe arrival at that place. The principal roads were so blocked up that even a skilful driver like Dupre would have failed in getting through; but, thanks to his great familiarity with the region, its nooks and corners, and its by-ways, they reached the fortress without serious injury. Their perils had been as numerous as imminent. Besides the dangers already recorded, they had many hair-breadth escapes from the Prussian shells, which fell fast and thick on all sides. We, therefore, need not wonder that a sigh of relief stole from the breast of Dupre, as well as the women, when the comparative comfort of their own home received them. Aspasia and Pauline delivered themselves with unalloyed satisfaction to the luxuries of the house, and even the former received, with a good grace, the excuses of her brother, who expressed his sincere sorrow at having been unabie to protect them.

Alcibiades alone refused to abandon himself to the enjoyment of the hour. No sooner had the ladies entered the house, when

he looked at his wateh, and discovered, to his astonishment, that it pointed to a quarter past ten. Miller had been sentenced about twelve o'clock, and if he wanted to witness the death-struggle of his victim, he had no time to lose. So he merely informed his father that important business called him away, but that he should try to be back for dinner.

After that, he hastened away in the direction of the prison, and soon disappeared in the archway through which he expected to see his rival march to his execution before the expiration of one short hour.

CHAPTER XVI.

Meanwhile Pauline and her aunt lay on a lounge in a state of utter exhaustion. Jeannette had received them with great manifestations of delight, and done everything in her power to alleviate their distress. She had prepared toast and hot punch, and insisted upon the ladies' partaking of all her dainties. While they ate and rested, she gave them the gossip of the day. A great number of "Prussiens" had been captured, she said, and one of them sentenced to be shot, on account of old offenses against the government.

"Poor fellow!" she exclaimed with pitying accent. "He is so handsome and noble looking! It is a pity to kill him; I am sure Mademoiselle will say the same thing, for she has seen him before."

"*I* seen him?" said Pauline, becoming attentive. "What do you mean, Jeannette? Where have I seen him?"

"Why! does Mademoiselle forget our adventure on the road near Froschweiler? Does she not mind how I trembled to meet the Prussians, fearing they would turn out devils incarnate? Our parson had told me so, you know; but I know better now, and think they are right clever people, and handsome, too, and—"

Pauline had, by this time, recovered from her first surprise.

"Stop, stop, Jeannette!" she exclaimed, eagerly. "Tell me,

rather, what this adventure has to do with the prisoner sentenced to be shot. You do not mean to say—"

"And indeed I do, Mademoiselle. The prisoner and one of our liberators are one and the same person. I ought to know, I think; for I saw him with my own eyes. You don't see such noble-looking chaps every day, you see; and so—"

"But, Jeannette, pray stop your rambling;" cried Pauline, becoming more and more alarmed. "Tell me which of the two has been sentenced. It wasn't—"

She hesitated to give utterance to a harrowing thought; but Jeannette drew her own conclusions, and said:

"Indeed it was, Mademoiselle. The best looking of the two. He speaks French like a Parisian, and 'tis him indeed they are going to shoot at twelve o'clock to-day."

Pauline sprang to her feet, as if a powerful galvanic battery had been applied to her body. Robert Miller to be shot at twelve o'clock, and she so powerless to help him! The thought was sickening. What should she do? Should she hasten to the place of execution, and cover with her body the bosom of the man whom, in this fearful crisis, she recognized as the great and only idol of her heart? Alas! She knew too well the iron laws of war to hope for a deliverance of the prisoner on the place of execution by her interference; but if this expedient was of no avail: was there no other way of saving him? might she not, by her fervent supplication, move the heart of one powerful enough to stay the execution? Her pulse flew with a feverish rapidity, as she vainly racked her brain for an expedient in this dreadful strait.

While she still thought and studied in vain, her ears listened to the further details of the sad story, as Jeannette gave them. She had been out, the evening before the last, to see the prisoners of whom everybody talked. When she got near the gate, she was surprised to see, amongst the captives, two officers whose faces looked familiar to her and whom, on stepping nearer, she recognized as their benefactors. She could not talk to them; but feeling a natural interest in them, she repeated her visit at the gate the next evening. Then and there she learned, to her horror, that one of the officers—Miller, the people called him—had

been tried for murder and high treason, and sentenced to be shot. When she arrived at this part of her story, she cast an anxious look around, and lowered her head and voice, before she exclaimed:

"And who do you think is at the bottom of all this? Nobody but young master, and—"

Again Pauline became the victim of a powerful emotion.

"Is it possible?" she exclaimed. "But stop, you need not defend your statement; for I am already too well convinced of its correctness. This is not his first attempt to take Miller's life: the bullet aimed at Miller, near Nancy, came from my cousin's hand as well."

"Oh! Pauline, be charitable!" exhorted Aspasia. "How can you have the heart to accuse your cousin of such a dreadful deed?"

"How can I, Aunt? Well, I have no time to argue, now. Can you not rather counsel me as to the steps that must be taken to spare Miller's life?"

"Indeed I cannot, Pauline; but if I could, I would not interfere between Justice and a criminal who probably deserves his punishment."

Pauline started back with amazement and indignation. Could it be that a member of her sex, a woman, should so far deny her gentler feelings as to prefer the dictates of stern justice to those of pity and compassion? If her aunt felt thus, how could she hope to gain counsel and assistance from her uncle, a man who held ease and comfort above all other goods, and naturally felt a grudge against the men who had deprived him of these goods? No! she must not expect to receive any succor from her friends! If anything was to be done, it must emanate from her alone, and unaided by foreign agencies, must it be carried out. With this conviction, resolution takes the place of the former hesitancy. A thought flashes through her brain, and, seizing hat and shawl, she says to the girl:

"Jeannette, have you the courage to assist me? I am determined to make an effort in his behalf: will you accompany me?"

"I will," said the girl; "and with all my heart. I'm not half so much afraid of the Prussians as I used to be."

"Be quick, then, for we have no time to lose. Oh good heavens! I fear it is too late already."

While Jeannette obeyed her injunction, Miss Dupre endeavored to change her resolution.

"Pauline! my good girl! this is madness!" she exclaimed. "What will Alcibiades think when he finds you absent? Consider—"

"Stop, Aunt Aspasia!" Pauline cried almost sternly. "My cousin's opinion is very indifferent to me, and even your advice I must disregard, if it differs from my resolution."

"But what will you do?"

"I prefer not to tell you; for if my family refuse to assist me, I shall, at least, take good care to secure myself against their interference. Are you ready, Jeannette? Very well, my girl, let us proceed."

"But my dear Pauline!—"

The departure of the mistress and the servant cut short all further remonstrances. Pauline drew down her veil and walked with so quick a step that Jeannette could hardly keep up with her.

"Dear me, how fast you walk!" she gasped. "Won't you tell now where we are going?"

"We are going to the mansion of the Sous-Prefect."

"And what are we going to do there?" the girl inquired, wonderingly.

"I hardly know myself, Jeannette. All I know is that this horrid murder must not be permitted, and I trust that God Almighty will guide me right and make me his instrument in foiling the machinations of an unscrupulous scoundrel. But listen! Eleven o'clock! Oh mercy! One more hour! I tremble when I think how much must be achieved in that period to save a life! And if I fail! Oh horrible thought too shocking to be entertained! If I fail, I shall hasten to the place of execution and *die* with him, since they refuse me the happiness of *living* with him. Come, Jeannette, be quick, my girl: here is the building."

The guard at the entry paid little attention to the two women, as they shy'y stole up the broad steps, and entered the hall. There

they saw that confusion and anarchy ruled in the halls of government as well as in the streets. True, a few sentinels were stationed here and there; but nevertheless the ingress to as well as egress from all the rooms seemed entirely unimpeded. Officers of all ranks, civilians of all classes, men of all ages rushed up and down the stairs, and seemed altogether too occupied with themselves to pay attention to others. Pauline was afraid to ask questions; but noticing a flight of steps more densely crowded than the others, she ascended it, giving Jeannette a hint to follow her. Her appearance seemed to attract some attention, for she and Jeannette were the only women in the crowd. A curious glance was now and then cast upon the veiled figure, that stole so noiselessly and yet so determinedly through the crowd.

At the top of the stairs they entered into a spacious ante chamber, from which several doors opened into adjacent apartments. The central door was hung with red velvet and two sentinels controlled the entry.

The men who approached this door had to communicate the nature of their errands to a gentleman who carried them to some person in the inner room, and either reported them as rejected or granted.

"The emperor!" thought Pauline, and from that moment her resolution was formed. There, in that room, was the only man who could stay the judgment which at the expiration of the next sixty minutes would deprive her of her dearest friend. But how should she accomplish it? There were many ahead of her who waited impatiently for the privilege of seeing the emperor. Could she wait until her turn? Would she be permitted to enter at all? Oh! these agonizing thoughts! Thoughts well adapted to drive the thinker mad! Minute after minute rolls into the lapse of Time, and no prospect of the crowd's getting thinner. This will never do! Despair seizes the waiting maiden, and, ignoring the diffidence of her sex, she steps to the foremost applicant, and says:

"Pardon, Monsieur! Will you allow me His Majesty's ear before you? I am a lone, unhappy woman, whose only chance of happiness depends upon the fulfilment of her prayer. Life and

death depend upon a few minutes interview with the emperor: will you, under these circumstances, grant my request?"

She looked at him with a steady gaze, her flushed countenance and prayerful look pleading with greater eloquence than her words. Fortunately, he seemed capable of appreciating uncommon motives as well as actions, for he bowed politely and said:

"You are a lady, Madame: therefore I grant your request as a matter of course. But, (excuse the question) is Madame certain that she will be received?"

"Mon Dieu! No, I am not. But if the emperor refuses to see me, I have no other alternative but to deliver myself to the arms of death!"

"That would be a poor resting-place for one so young," the stranger replied with a smile. "If Madame will accept my services as counsel, I shall take pleasure in introducing you to His Majesty, and defend your case."

"Oh! Monsieur, how generous! But I knew that God would not forsake me. Listen to my story, Monsieur, and you will see how worthy of your patronage is the cause I advocate."

"I believe it, Madame; but here comes General Reille. We must take advantage of our chance as long as we are able. You can tell me your story when you tell the emperor. General, have the goodness to announce me and a client to His Majesty."

"Exactly, Excellence," replied the adjutant with a somewhat dubious smile, and disappeared. A minute later he beckoned the pair into the presence of Napoleon. The emperor sat in an easy-chair, clad in the brilliant uniform of his guards, over which he wore a large cloak of dark blue. His face was pale, and the restless motions of his hands and feet, indicated a greatly agitated mind. On seeing the announced visitor in the company of so unexpected a person, he raised his hand and inquired with a touch of wonderment:

"Eh bien, Monsieur: what can we do for you? You appear in the role of a counselor, to-day."

"I do, Sire; but strange as it sounds, I am as ignorant of the cause I plead, as Your Majesty."

"Ah! you are playing masquerade," said Napoleon with a forced smile. "That may be a very pleasant change for the sameness

of war; but unfortunately we have no leisure to enjoy it. Have the goodness to speak more explicitly."

"I beg Your Majesty's pardon for being so trifling. My offense was entirely uintentional. This young lady can, in a few words, explain the nature of her errand."

Pauline had trembled with impatience at this delay. She was now too well pleased with this opportunity to lose it, and, stepping forward, she said with a deep and graceful courtesy:

"Your Majesty sees in me the humble petitioner for a life. When the clock strikes twelve a noble heart will cease to beat for an old offense, which nothing but the gratification of private revenge has drawn from oblivion. Oh! Sire, see me here at your feet, and grant my petition for a life so harmless to you and so dear to me! Sire, in the name of God, before whose throne we all hope for mercy on the day of judgment, have compassion on the culprit, and dispatch me to him with a message of mercy worthy of so great a ruler!"

She had thrown herself at his feet, and lay there the personification of humble supplication. Napoleon was moved; but he was also puzzled.

"I do not understand, Mademoiselle," he said. "I know nothing of a culprit that was to be executed to-day. Of whom do you speak?"

"Oh, I can now explain, Sire," said Pauline's counselor. "It is well that I was ignorant of the nature of your case, or I might have hesitated the commission."

"The culprit is a great criminal then?" inquired Napoleon.

"Oh, no! I did not mean that. He is not dangerous individually—but collectively. In other words, he is a German, a prisoner taken before Beaumont."

"And sentenced for any late offense within our jurisdiction ?"

"No Sire; for a conspiracy into which youthful folly rather than malice, drove him years ago."

"He has a warm advocate," said the emperor, smiling. "Who played informer in his case?"

A deep blush mantled her cheeks.

"I am sorry to tell you," she said. "My own cousin, Alcibiades Dupre, played that disgraceful role."

"And for what reason?"

"I know of none, Sire."

"I think I do," replied Napoleon with a smile. "But we surely must spoil his game for him. Monsieur, will you take it upon yourself to see this righted. I'll write you a short reprieve which you may carry to the place of execution. The time is twelve o' clock, you say? Really, then, you have no time to lose. Here is an order to postpone the execution twenty-four hours. I shall see that the case is thoroughly sifted and justice done to all parties."

With these words he handed Pauline a paper which he had drawn up and signed. The poor girl was almost beside herself with joy, her desire of showing her gratitude and of reaching the fatal spot in time struggling for the mastery. Napoleon saw it.

"Don't thank me," he said gravely; "for there is no occasion. I fight the Germans on the battle-field, but not on the scaffold. Who knows how soon I may be in a position to claim *their* mercy. It would not look well to come with blood-stained hands. Too much of it has been shed already."

He turned and Pauline and her companion hastily left the room and the palace.

"It is a quarter of twelve," he said looking at his watch. "Let us hurry to the place of execution or we may be too late."

Pauline quickened her steps; but suddenly she came to a stop, and said with a frightened mien:

"But this place—where is it? I do not know."

"Nor I; that is vexing. But do you know the prison in which your friend was confined?"

"I don't, but Jeannette does."

"Then let her lead the way. Perhaps they havn't taken him away yet."

"Oh, heaven grant it!" exclaimed Pauline; and a moment afterwards they were on their way to the prison. On their arrival, they learned that the captive had been removed fifteen minutes ago, and that his guard had marched him down the street in a southern direction. The jailor also knew that he was to be shot somewhere on the ramparts; but could not specify the place. He

had no doubt, however, that the inquirers could easily ascertain the route which the squad had taken, as a large mob had accompanied them on their way; stragglers of which could even then be seen in the streets.

This information was rather discouraging; but delay being fatal, they continued their way, trusting to good luck and diligent inquiry. Nor were their efforts quite unsuccessful; for every now and then they found a trace of the party, distinct enough to encourage them to new efforts. The rampart, however, was reached without obtaining a definite clue of their final destiny, and when the clock on the cathedral struck twelve, they were as far from their aim as ever. At the first stroke, Pauline uttered a cry and trembled so violently, that her companion had to support her, to keep her from falling.

"Take heart!" he cried. "It may not be too late yet, if we continue our efforts. If you give way under your emotions, we may as well give up at once.''

"I am strong! I am strong!" gasped the poor girl, drawing rather than following her companion. A minute afterwards they turned a corner, and came upon an open place, on the far-end of which the dreaded tragedy was just put in scene. Their standing point was rather elevated, and they could look over the heads of the spectators, and see all the principal actors of the piece. French infantry formed three lines of a rectangle, two sides of which were considerably longer than the other. The nearside was occupied by twelve soldiers, evidently ordered to execute the sentence, while the far end was open, showing merely the tall and manly figure of the prisoner. The spectators surrounded three sides of the rectangle, taking good care to keep out of the line of shooting, but yelling and hooting and insulting the prisoner to the best of their ability. Everything seemed ready for the execution. The arms of the captive seemed to be tied on his back; the soldiers had their guns levelled, and the commanding officer his sword lifted as if ready to speak the fatal word—

The feelings of Pauline at this fearful sight can be more easily imagined than described. Her heart ceased to beat; a violent tremor shook her body, and the ground appeared to recede from under her feet. She struggled hard to overcome her agitation,

but to no avail. The arm which she tried to raise, fell powerless to her side, and when she endeavored to utter a warning cry, her tongue seemed to cleave to the roof of her mouth. A moment afterwards a dark veil laid itself across her eyes; she tottered and a heavy weight on his arm showed her companion that a benign swoon had for the present freed her from all grief.

Long as it took me to chronicle these events and emotions, they had hardly occupied a second. But the protector of the unhappy girl felt that the loss of another second might seal the fate of the prisoner. Suffering her body to slide to the ground, he sprang forward, uttering at the same time a shout well calculated to attract the attention of the soldiers. It was too late! Before he could take a second step towards the scene of action, a flash blinded his eyes, and a heavy report sounded in his ears. A feeling of nausea compelled him to stop; he covered his eyes and turned around to avoid the sight of the dreadful spectacle which he knew to be in store for him. At the same time an unaccountable shudder crept over his body, shaking him like a raging fever. He staggered towards the body of his protegee, in order to be the first to break to her the dreadful news on her return to consciousness. All at once, however, he stops. What is this? What does the cry of woe behind his back signify? He hears sounds of pain, screams of rage and shrieks of terror. Something unusual must have happened. He turns, and a fearful sight meets his eyes. The prisoner whose bloody corpse he expects to behold stretched on the ground, stands erect; but they who, a moment ago, held their rifles aimed at his breast, lie low, weltering in their blood, some dead, some dying. Nor are they alone. A mysterious dispensation seems to have visited the spectators as well as actors. Men in blouses lie mingled with soldiers; yes, even women and children count amongst the victims. He rubs his eyes to chase away the fearful vision; but the attempt is idle, for a second look shows him the same sickening sight. However, he is neither weak nor timid. With a firm step he hastens towards the spot, to find the clue to this mysterious riddle. The commanding officer has escaped the general destruction. To him the stranger turns and asks:

"Mon Dieu, what does this signify? For the love of God, tell me what has happened?"

"Oh, we have simply exchanged roles," replied the other with a ghastly smile. "The executioners have become the executed. Behold the effects of a Prussian shell!"

A light dawned upon Pauline's protector. The flash, the report, the subsequent slaughter: everything was explained now, and a secret awe at this mysterious dispensation filled his soul.

"A timely interference," he muttered, handing the imperial decree to the officer. "But for it we should have been too late."

The brow of the officer darkened.

"Why wasn't this put sooner into my hands? It would have saved the lives of a dozen brave comrades."

"It was only issued twenty minutes ago. We tried our best to reach you in time, but, alas! were too late to avoid this catastrophe. I think I see in it the retribution of a higher power for a wanton and untimely act of mock-justice."

"I did not like it any more than you," said the officer, gloomily. "Still we soldiers have no choice. I was ordered to the execution and had to obey the distasteful mandate. But what is this? What does she want?"

These questions were elicited by Pauline's movements. The poor girl had recovered from her swoon. Her first gaze had been into the face of Jeannette, who bent over her with affectionate solicitude. Then came a rush of thoughts, bringing with them the recollectlon of the recent past. She rose with a nervous start, and cast a glance at the spot where she was afraid to meet a fearful spectacle. *She* too beheld an erect form instead of a mangled body; *she* too doubted the correctness of her vision; but when she had gazed a second with bewildered eyes, she uttered a cry of wild delight, and ran towards the prisoner with the agility of the antelope. He saw her coming; but his features reflected by no means the rapture beaming forth from hers. His brows were contracted, and a bitter smile contorted his lips. Pauline, however, did not notice it; she saw only that he was living, unhurt, intact. A great joy filled her heart to overflowing. It silenced her tongue; it drove tears into her eyes; it caused her limbs to shake like the leaves of the aspen. When she reached

the place where Miller stood, she sank upon her knees, folded her hands, and looked into his face with eyes from which the tears ran in copious streams. But while she cried, she laughed at the same time, and her heavy tongue struggled for utterance.

"Alive! sound! unharmed!" she muttered, stretching her hands towards him with yearning affection. Then, seeing that he was still bound, she sprang to her feet, fumbled for her pocket, and drew therefrom a pocket-knife, which her trembling fingers could hardly open.

"Shame on them!" she cried, her eyes flashing indignantly. "How could they insult you so, *you*, who know so well how to face death! But now you are loose, and safe, and will soon be altogether free! Oh God, this is joy! this is bliss! more bliss than I am capable of bearing! Save my poor head from reeling!"

Her words, her manners, her actions had in a measure softened the expression of his face. Still it looked gloomy and suspicious enough, when he replied:

"I fail to comprehend you, Madam. If this is acting, I must confess that you play your role to perfection. Only you play so *many* roles that I am at a loss to divine your true character."

Pauline started back with a mien in which surprise and grief were strangely blended.

"This to me?" she cried reproachfully. "To *me*, who suffered tortures for your sake, such as a hundred bullets cannot possibly inflict? To *me*, who so far forgets her maidenly dignity, as to press her solicitude upon a stranger, and an enemy of my country in the bargain? Oh! justly am I punished for yielding to an impulse so unreasonable; to an affection so ill-requited!"

Miller was the prey of conflicting emotions.

"Oh Miss Delmont!" he cried; "what shall I think of this? How shall I reconcile your conflicting actions? where find the key for this enigma? You profess the most unbounded joy at my preservation and yet I behold you in close alliance with him, who persecutes me with the most untiring persistency. The bullet of the assasin sought my life at Nancy—and his foot-prints were traced to *your* dwelling. Here a scoundrel secures my condemnation for an old offense, and again I meet you on the scene

of execution, where you would even behold my bloody corpse, if a German shell had not interrupted their bloody sport. But this sport is only interrupted, not suspended. See, they are getting ready for a resumption of their work. Step aside to make room for their bullets, and report to your associate that you found me strong in my hour of trial. See! there he is! I thought he would be, for the vulture is always ready to devour his victim. Go, temptress! go! This is no time to listen to your alluring insinuations. I need the few minutes left me to make my peace with my Maker. Go!"

Pauline wrung her hands in deep distress.

"Oh this is bitter! this is cruel!" she cried with heart-rending accents. "What must I do to undeceive you, to prove to you that, though allied to yon monster by the ties of blood, I am not his kindred in disposition, and a stranger to his bloody designs. Would I be here, Robert, if I rejoiced in your destruction?"

"Why not?" he said with a bitter laugh. "They say that some of your country-women would gladly drink our heart's blood."

"But I procured a respite for you, Robert, a respite written in the emperor's own hand. They will not kill you now, but lead you back to your prison, until—"

"Until they are ready to take me out a second time and finish their work. I do not thank you for this interference. I do not thank you for the prolongation of my trial. Go! *go*! I say, and do no longer embitter my last hours by your presence!"

This was too much for the poor girl. She fainted a second time, and would have fallen to the ground, if her protector had not, at that moment, come up and caught her in his arms. Robert cast a glance at her, in which love and bitterness struggled for the mastery, and it is hard to say how he would have acted, if the soldiers had not, just then, closed around him, and deprived him of the power to follow his inclinations. The men eyed him with savage glances portending evil, and some of them muttered curses and menaces sufficiently loud to strike the ear of the commanding officer. He told Robert that the emperor had reprieved him for twenty-four hours, and then ordered his men to form and march the captive back to prison. However there was some hesitancy on their part. The French army was

rapidly changing into a mob. Discipline began to give way to insubordination and to make matters worse in this instance, outside insinuations threatened to fan the fatal spark into a flame.

"Never mind him, boys," cried a voice, which Miller recognized as that of his pursuer. "Give it to the Dutch dog, now! Kill him on the spot! Will you show more mercy than the Prussian shells? Down with him, and hurrah for France!"

One symptom of fear, or even of hesitation on the part of the officer, and Robert's death would have been certain. But fortunately that officer was equal to the situation. Drawing his revolver, he cried with a penetrating voice:

"Silence! I command here, and woe to him who dares to disobey me. I'll shoot him down and half-a-dozen others if need be. This man's life has been entrusted to me, and the road to his destruction goes only over my corpse. Attention men! Form ranks! Ready!"

At this moment Robert himself interfered.

"Let them have their way," he addressed the officer. "Why prolong this struggle another day? This seeming mercy is only cruelty in disguise. Come on, ye men, and do your worst. A true German fears neither your bullets nor your daggers."

"Attention!" the officer continued without heeding Miller's appeal. "Shoulder arms! March! *March!*"

Once more discipline exercised its influence. Yielding to the stern command, the men put themselves in motion, and, a moment afterwards, Robert was on his way back to prison. Gloomy and despondent as he was, he could not help noticing the growing signs of disorder and anarchy. The streets swarmed with soldiers who had already stripped off all bonds of discipline. Some were drunk, and others continually broke into taverns and private houses to become so too. Their curses and the screams of the helpless citizens, formed a fit accompaniment to the whizzing and bursting shells which fell on the doomed town as thickly as a hail-shower. The commander of the small squad had to use alleys and lanes, in order to avoid the obstacles which obstructed the principal thoroughfares, and even then they only managed to reach the prison-gates with the greatest difficulty. The officer heaved a sigh of relief on their arrival, and well he might, for

soon afterwards the last spark of consciousness of duty died out in the bosom of his soldiers, and, fifteen minutes later, they were members of the rabble which made the streets of Sedan insecure.

But to return to poor Pauline. When she awoke, she gazed into the familiar, but to her disgusting features of her cousin. His sight did more to restore her strength than any restorative could have done. Freeing herself from the supporting arms of her protector, she raised herself with a vigor and energy which greatly surprised that gentleman. Perhaps she had the intention of addressing Dupre, for her brows contracted, and her lips opened as if ready for utterance; but he anticipated her and said:

"Ah! Miss Pauline in the role of the heroine! You must have a decided predilection for adventures, for hardly have I fetched you out of *one* scrape, when I find you plunged into another. But this will never do, Mademoiselle. I have no desire whatever to play Don Quixote on your account."

A look of indescribable contempt was Pauline's only answer.

"*You* play Don Quixote?" she asked, scornfully. "You meant Sancho Panza, did you not? But whether one or the other, it matters little; for henceforth I release you from all your obligations of making a knave or a fool of yourself on my account."

The veins on Dupre's forehead swelled until they stood out like whip-cords; but before he could give vent to the feeling of fury which evidently possessed him, Pauline spoke again. Turning to the stranger, she said:

"Monsieur, I have presumed on your time and patience so long that I hesitate to impose upon you any longer. But the presence of this *fellow* (she emphasized the word) compels me to ask your company to my residence. It is not far, and, as a reward for your generosity, you will for ever possess the gratitude of a poor and helpless girl."

The stranger readily complied with her request. Choosing the least frequented streets, the couple soon succeeded in reaching the house, where Aspasia awaited her niece's return with fear and trembling. The stranger saw, from the manner in which Pauline treated Dupre, that something was wrong between them; but, being delicate, he abstained from asking questions, and soon the

door separated him from a girl, for whom he had formed a sincere regard and attachment, in spite of the shortness of their acquaintance.

When Pauline had reached the house, she at once retired to her room, and there threw herself upon her bed, dressed as she was. The unnatural strength which had carried her through so many trying scenes, now suddenly forsook her, and made room for a despondency, a feeling of despair, which no consolations on the part of Jeannette could mitigate. Aspasia attempted several times to gain access to her room; but the positive order of the sufferer prevented Jeannette from humoring her desire. Jeannette herself spoke in this way:

"Laws! Miss Pauline, what a fuss you make about nothin' at all. Aint he saved? Aint he sound and safe in prison, where them arful bumb-shiles can't hit him half as well?"

"But Jeannette, to be thus misunderstood! To be so unjustly suspected of crimes, for which the darkest criminal would consider himself too good."

"Ah, bah! what need you care? Don't your conscience set you right? why then do you trouble yourself about this ungrateful wretch, and a *Prussian* in the bargain? Aint there a thousand Frenchmen better and nicer than he?"

"*I* never saw them, Jeannette, nor you either, if you will admit the truth. You only talk so to console me; *yesterday* you talked very differently. Didn't you sing the praise of this very man from morning until night, Jeannette?"

This objection somewhat confused the servant.

"Well then, Miss Pauline, if you insist upon it: he *is* a nice man and no mistake; but then I see no use to take his words so much to heart. He was imposed upon, the poor fellow was, and if he got mad in a measure, we cannot blame him much, can we, Madam? Just to think of it! First they take him prisoner, and parade him through the streets, for the people to hoot at him. Then they drag him into court, ands entence him to death. After that, they throw him into prison and finally get a dozen soldiers to make a target of him! Just think of it, Madam! Isn't it aggravatin'? Isn't it enough to make a lamb mad like a ravin' ti-

ger? It strikes me you oughtn't to blame him so much for his want of perliteness."

"But Jeannette, I was foolish enough to show him my great affection. I laid my innermost heart bare to him, and he—cruel man!—trampled upon it."

"Oh nay! Miss Pauline, it aint as bad as that now. He likes you well enough, I warrant you, only his anger got the best of his affection. When you swooned the second time, I saw him cast a glance at you, hot enough to set a stone on fire, I warrant you."

A ray of joy flew over Pauline's face.

"Is it true?" she inquired, eagerly; "but I *know* it is not. You merely say that to comfort me."

"May the witches pull all my hair out if it isn't true. I must be very much mistaken, if that Prussian don't love you a little better yet, than you love him."

Pauline said nothing, but a radiant smile stole over her face a second time, and settled there.

"If I was sure of this—" she said at last.

"Sure of it? Why it is the easiest thing for you to find out."

"But how?" Pauline inquired eagerly.

"How? Goodness, you little stupid! Go to the prison and ask him."

But to this Pauline could not consent. Her pride had been wounded too deeply, to tolerate such a humiliation. Still, it might listen to a compromise, and a compromise was finally effected. It was resolved that Jeannette should go to the prison in the morning, and solicit an interview with the captive. In this interview she was to explain everything, and, if possible, set matters right between her mistress and the prisoner.

This compromise had a very salutary effect on the young lady. Her excitement and sorrow abated; but, in proportion as her mind calmned down to a normal state, Nature claimed her dues over the exhausted body. The eyes closed, and when Jeannette leaned over her mistress to ascertain her condition, the deep and tranquil breathing of the girl indicated that she had sunk into a deep and invigorating slumber.

CHAPTER XVII.

PAULINE was not the only person who took a lively interest in Robert's fate. Schultze and the other prisoners had witnessed his departure with sadness, and, during the balance of the first day, watched for his return with pardonable impatience. But no Robert made his appearance; nor could they learn anything concerning him from the sentinel. The fellow either was ignorant of his fate and whereabouts, or feigned ignorance. Night set in without bringing a solitary sign of the lost friend and comrade, and the cold seemed colder, the darkness darker to the poor fellows on that account. Nor would their uncertainty terminate on the following morning. The sentinel was changed; but the newcomer knew no more than his predecessor. Schultze made several attempts to elicit information from the persons who looked at them now and then through the bars of the gate; but the people either failed to comprehend him, or they punished with scornful disregard a fellow who had been bold enough to invade la belle France. The morning wore away like the night, and Schultze's impatience reached a fever heat and became almost intolerable. At last, about two o'clock in the afternoon, when he approached the gate for the hundredth time, hoping against hope to elicit from the outsiders news concerning his friend, he noticed a dull, but good-natured face which seemed familiar to him. The recognition appeared mutual, for the fellow grinned and nodded, and condescended even to a civil "how d'ye do?"

"Now or never," thought Schultze, and returned the other's salutation with all the urbanity at his command.

"You know me, don't you?" the fellow commenced the conversation.

"I think I do," replied Schultze. "Only I can't place you just now. Where did we meet, my friend?"

"Oh several places. Once, you know, we met on the road, when the Turcos were after our horses."

"I didn't see you then, my friend, did I?"

"No. I suppose you didn't, for I had hid in the bushes. But I saw *you*, you know."

"I suppose you did, considering I hadn't hid. And the second time: where was that?"

"It was at Nancy, you know. You were at our house, you know, you and the other chap."

Schultze rejoiced at his good fortune which at last seemed willing to put him on the right track.

"Oh, you mean at Miss Delmont's villa?" he inquired.

The outsider grinned and nodded.

"The other chap (as you call him) was captured with us, but taken away, yesterday. Do you happen to know what has become of him?"

"I reckon I do," said the other with a new grin.

"For Goodness' sake, tell me then," cried Schultze eagerly. "I die with impatience to learn his fate. Where did they take him to?"

"To the court-house, Sir."

"And why?"

"To try him, I reckon."

"For what?"

"I couldn't tell you."

"What *can* you tell then. Was he found guilty?"

A nod again.

"And sentenced?"

Another nod.

"To what? Oh my good fellow, for the sake of heaven, tell me to what?"

The outsider made the pantomime of shooting.

"To be shot?" cried Schultze, a shudder creeping over his body. "When—when is the sentence going to be executed?"

"To-day at noon."

"No, no! it *can* not be! It *must* not be! It *shall* not be! My good, my noble Robert butchered in cold blood, and I so near and unable to assist him! Oh God! art thou determined to make me doubt thy being!"

Schultze in his grief had seized the bars of the gate and now shook them with the frenzy of despair. Over the terrible news

he had entirely forgotten the informer, who stood as if he were treading on hot coal, and tried in vain to catch the eye of the sorrowing prisoner. At last, he put his hand through the bars, touched Schultze's arm, and said:

"They *were* to shoot him; they *were*, you know, but then, they didn't do it."

The reaction on the prisoner was powerful. At first he stood like one stupified, gazing at the other with a vacant eye. Then, when he began to comprehend the truth, tears started to his eyes, and he felt as if he could embrace the whole world. At the same time, he was angry at the fellow's stupidity, and might have given him a sound shaking if he had been able to reach him. This feeling also lasted but a moment, and left in his heart nothing but a pure and unalloyed happiness. His excitement abated and with it that thickness and fulness in his throat, which had deprived him of the power of utterance.

"They didn't shoot him, did you say, you—"

He meant to add "blockhead;" but checked himself in time to suppress the word.

The other shook his head.

"But what did they do with him?"

"They took him back to prison."

"So he has been pardoned."

"No Sir; only reprieved. To-morrow they are going to try him over again."

"Not—"

Again Schultze checked himself. This time he meant to say "*not if I can help it.*" But as that did not concern his informer, he kept it to himself. At the same time, he thought proper to discontinue the conversation, for the sentinel had cast several ugly glances at him and seemed determined to stop the interview. So Schultze yielded with a good grace, what otherwise would have been wrung from him by compulsion. He nodded to his new friend and then returned to his comrades, to whom he communicated the good news with a caution, as he did not want the sentinel to know that he had received information of any consequence.

When he was through, he said with seeming nonchalance:

"And now, lads, be watchful and quiet. I for one shall not let our comrade perish, without lifting a hand for his rescue. I know, I know, what you want to say, and that I can count on you. But make no noise now, and look as unconcerned as you can. I shall set to thinking, how to effect this matter, and let you know as soon as my plan is ripe. You keep chatting in the meantime, to make yon fellow think you are in ecstacies over your fare and quarters. If you can force yourselves to sing, so much the better."

But to sing was out of the question. So the poor fellows endeavored to cheer up at least, and give to their words and faces a gayety which was foreign to their hearts. Every now and then a loud noise in the neighboring street attracted their attention, and they were considerably astonished to see so many soldiers of all descriptions mingle with the mob at the gate. These soldiers uttered the most fearful menaces against their lives, and it was not so much the presence of the guard which saved them; but the want of guns in the hands of the revilers. Several stones were thrown at them, but without effect. As their sight seemed to infuriate the mob, Schultze advised them to remove the bundles of straw to a remote corner, which was less protected against the weather, but concealed them entirely from the gaze of the tumultuous crowd. The days of September are short in that northern latitude, and towards five darkness began to sink upon the court. Schultze told the others that his plan had been formed, but that he would keep it to himself until they had received their supper, when there would be no danger of further interruption.

Until then this frugal meal had always been handed to them at five; but this time the clock of a neighboring church struck six, without a sign of supper. Schultze addressed the sentinel, to learn the reason; but no sentinel was visible. The noise in the street, however, increased from minute to minute, until it assumed such a magnitude and so ferocious a character, that the prisoners did not know whether they could credit their ears.

"There is something wrong out there," said one of the men.

"I think so too," said another. "I shouldn't wonder if our boys had something to do with it."

"Nor I," remarked Schultze; "but we cannot afford to remain

here and await the development of things. It seems we have to do without supper, and if they fast us a day that way, we shall lack strength to undertake anything at all. Listen therefore to what I have to propose to you."

They all crowded aronnd him and he proceeded:

"The gate is too strong for us to break. Moreover, the place is too public to think of such a thing; for even if we should succeed in forcing our way through, we should be discovered in the street and consequently recaptured. Through the gate then we cannot make our exit. Fortunately, however, I have discovered another outlet. Last night, when you all slept, the thought of poor Miller drove me from my bundle, and caused me to wander over this court in a restless state of mind. All at once I saw a light shine through a crack in yonder shutter, and being curious to know the cause, I climbed the wall and peeped in. I discovered a kind of arsenal, in which ammunition, clothing, guns and so forth were piled up. Several men were walking up and down, carrying the lantern the light of which I had discovered. Ten minutes later they withdrew, leaving the room in utter darkness. Of course I descended; deeming my discovery of very little importance, I did not waken you to communicate it. In the morning I forgot it over my grief at Miller's disappearance; but no sooner had yon fellow delivered his startling news, when the necessity of urgent measures lent it too much importance to be neglected. We have to liberate ourselves and our comrade in the bargain, and in this my discovery may greatly assist us. We are no longer guarded, and the arsenal seems to be equally neglected. Indeed, the tumultuous conduct of the French soldiers in the streets, makes me think that they are in a state of mutiny, and that we shall find no great difficulty in carrying out our object. My plan is this: The arsenal contains uniforms of all descriptions. After forcing an entry (which I think can be easily accomplished) we must each of us select a uniform that fits us, and then proceed in the character of French soldiers to Miller's prison. In the general confusion we cannot find it very difficult to set him free and leave the town."

"That is a capital idea; but we do not understand their language: how can we pass ourselves for Frenchmen?"

"I know enough French to pass for an Alsatian. Besides what I lack in correctness I shall make up by swagger. Any other objections?"

There were none, and so Schultze lost no time in carrying his plan into immediate execution. He proceeded to the window in question, followed by his comrades who, with their shoulders, prepared a platform for him to stand upon. The window was about eight feet from the ground and protected by an old wooden shutter, which yielded to the first attempt to force it open. It gave a pretty loud bang, though, as it flew back, and the conspirators listened a moment in breathless suspense, to see whether the noise had been heard. Everything around them remained silent, however; in fact they could have beaten all the shutters to pieces, before the noisy crowd in the street would have noticed it.

The sashes were double ones, opening on hinges, and Schultze found it necessary to crush a pane in order to withdraw a bolt which held them in place. This accomplished and the sashes opened without further difficulty. Schultze jumped in, assisting his comrades in following him, until they all stood on the floor of the arsenal. The sashes were then reshut, and the shutters fastened as before.

"Now," said Schultze, "let us reflect a moment. I have a few matches in my pocket, and if I am not mistaken, I noticed several lanterns hanging from the ceiling last night. If we can find them, well and good. If not, we must hunt some paper or other combustible material to light us on our way out. I'll strike a match now: watch and see whether you can discover anything."

A moment afterwards, a bluish flame lit up the darkness, and when the match was fully ignited, they really discovered the lanterns of which Schultze had spoken. On examination most of them were found empty; but at last they discovered one which held enough oil to answer the purpose. It was lit and by its shine the adventurers continued their explorations. The walls of the room were covered with infantry-uniforms, and all the men but Schultze found no difficulty in securing their fit. For such giants as him, however, the French tailors had evidently made no provision. He had to hunt for ten minutes, before he found a suit answering the purpose. It was a corporal's uniform, and

much too small for our friend; but necessity knows no law, and after considerable tugging and stretching, the suit was made to answer.

This accomplished, the men turned towards the weapons, in order to arm themselves for the expedition. Each took a chassepot, a short, straight sword and a large revolver. The latter weapon, of course, did not belong to the regular outfit of the foot-soldier, and they therefore concealed it under their garments. The next step was to procure ammunition. True, fighting did not enter into their calculations, but it would surely do no harm to be prepared for emergencies. Searching the hall, they soon found cartridges for the chassepots as well as the revolvers, and now considered themselves well prepared for the second and more perilous part of their enterprise. Schultze seized the lantern and led the way to the front of the building, as they would have to make their exit in that direction. On their way they passed through a kind of office, where implements for writing lay profusely scattered on a large table. At the sight of them a thought struck the mind of the leader.

"Stop a moment, lads," he said. "I must try and see whether I cannot forge an order of His Grace the Duke of Magenta, for the release of our imprisoned friend. I can write French better than speak it, and it would be strange indeed, if we couldn't pass off such an order on an ignorant French jailor."

Handing the lantern to one of the men, Schultze sat down to carry out his design. He thought a moment, and then rapidly penned a few lines, taking care to give the letters the appearance of haste. The paper was carefully folded and pocketed, and the march resumed. As they approached the front-door, the noise from the street reached them with redoubled force. The most perilous portion of the venture was now at hand, and Schultze told his men.

"We'll have to force the lock," he said; "and that can hardly be done without a noise. This accomplished, we must blow out the lantern and endeavor to reach the street without attracting attention. Once there, the darkness and prevailing confusion will effectively protect us."

"But look here, lieutenant," interposed one of the men. "I

don't think there is any occasion for forcing the door. Leastways I for my part see neither lock nor bolt to hinder us from going out."

Schultze held the lantern to the lock and examined it.

"By Jupiter!" he said, "you are right. This beats all I ever saw. These Frenchers must be raving mad to leave their magazines unprotected in that fashion. Well, so much the better for us. Get ready, all of you, to leave the building. I'll blow out the lantern and open the door to let you pass. Go out as noiselessly as you can and await my coming at the foot of the stairs. Be careful, though, not to attract the attention of the people in the street."

After these words he blew out the light and turned the knob of the lock. The door yielded readily to his pull, and in five minutes the men had all left the building. As soon as Schultze had counted the last one, he went out himself and, after shutting the door, joined his comrades. They had posted themselves in the deeper shadow of the wall, and gazed wonderingly upon the strange spectacle in sight. A tumultuous crowd floated up and down the street in an endless wave, some singing and shouting, others screaming and uttering imprecations, but nearly all under the influence of ardent drink. The battle seemed to have ceased, but numerous traces of it betrayed the fierceness of the recent struggle. The distant horizon was lit up with a lurid shine, originating, no doubt, from the burning villages around Sedan. Nor did these conflagrations seem to be confined to the *surroundings* of Sedan. To judge from the brilliant blaze which now and then rose over the neighboring roofs and cast a fiery reflection on the windows of the houses opposite the arsenal, the town itself had partly fallen a prey to the devouring element. The people, however, seemed to pay no attention to this circumstance, for they continued to stroll up and down the street, as if there were nothing to interfere with their brutal pastime. At the same time they were too much occupied with themselves to pay any attention to our adventurers. They might have marched from one end of the town to the other, without having elicited a single remark or received a challenge. But there was *one* great difficulty to be overcome: they did not know the where-abouts of

Miller's prison. Schultze had not the heart to inquire of the drunken revellers. They were soldiers with but few exceptions, and our friend did not know how far his French and his disguise would carry him in safety. He was still hesitating as to the best course to take, when a dark figure glided along the wall, and stopped immediately in front of the arsenal. It heaved a deep sigh and shrank back into the deeper shadow of the walls. This movement brought it in contact with Schultze, who had comprehended its intention too late to avoid the meeting. The figure turned and, on seeing so many men, uttered a low cry and started back in dismay. The fear of the stranger gave Schultze courage to address him.

"Fear nothing from us," he said. "We are sober and not inclined to harm anybody."

These assuring words seemed to quiet the other's fear. He stepped nearer and said:

"I am glad to find one sober being in this dreadful crowd. I wish I had never left my house."

"Perhaps we can assist you in reaching it."

"Oh, Monsieur, I would thank you so much."

"Well, we shall be glad to accomodate you; but one service is worth another."

"And what can I do for you?"

"Lead us to the prison of Sedan. We have an order to go there, and don't know the way."

"Well, that is fortunate. I live only a few doors from the jail."

"Then lead the way. Our errand is of the greatest importance and we have no time to lose."

The stranger manifested his willingness and the band put itself in motion. The guide walked by the side of Schultze, and the others formed in double file, without awaiting a command which might have betrayed them.

"You have the German accent," remarked the guide, after a while.

"Yes, we are from Alsatia."

"Poor Alsatia! It must suffer dreadfully under the yoke of these barbarians?"

"It groans under their iron rule," said Schultze, uttering himself a mournful sigh.

"But they'll be avenged! France will rise in majestic indignation, and drive these invaders from her sacred soil!"

"It looks a good deal like it," Schultze was on the point of replying; but checking himself he merely uttered a "sacre" which his companion was at liberty to construe at his pleasure.

They walked through several streets, keeping as close to the walls as they could. More than once a drunken soldier addressed them, summoning them to join in the revel, and calling them fools for continuing to slave for their officers. These interruptions, however, remained without consequences, and after the expiration of about fifteen minutes, the little band reached the massive portal of the prison. The guide uttered the most copious assurances of his gratitude, while Schultze, determined not to be out-done in politeness, maintained that the obligation was entirely on their part. The connection here ended to mutual satisfaction, and when the burgher had disappeared, Schultze ascended the stairs in front of the building, and, ringing the bell, demanded admittance. Ten minutes, however, elapsed without bringing a response, and Schultze began to fear that the French had deserted their prison as they had abandoned their arsenal, when a second pull at the bell finally brought a response. The key grated in the lock, and when the door opened with a dismal creaking on the hinges, Schultze perceived a woman in a wrapper, holding a tallow candle and eyeing the visitors with a half curious, half indignant glance.

"Where is the jailor?" inquired Schultze, determined to cut short this scrutiny.

"Dieu le sait! Heaven knows!" was the mournful reply. "He revels with the others in the streets. What do you want of him?"

"I bear a dispatch for him from Marshal McMahon."

"Ah indeed!" said the woman more respectfully. "I am sorry he isn't at home."

"Yes, but that isn't sufficient," said Schultze rather sternly. "My warrant calls for the German prisoner, and we must have him. Can you read, Madam?"

With these words Schultze held the bogus order in the woman's face.

"Eh bon, Monsieur, no, no, Sir," she replied with a shake of her head; "but it is all the same. I suppose it is all right, and I shall conduct you to the cell. In truth I don't care if you take them all. Everything seems upside down, anyhow, and I should not wonder much to see the world fall to pieces. My husband has gone on a spree; the rations haven't been furnished, and the prisoners will either have to go or starve."

With these words she turned and walked into the building, evidently expecting the new-comers to accompany her. Schultze of course was not slow to understand her, and followed on her heels with an excitement difficult to overcome.

The woman stopped at the end of a vaulted passage, and said:

"Here it is, Sir; please to hold my candle."

Schultze complied, and saw how she picked a key from a large bundle, and, by means of it, opened a heavy iron door.

"Entrez! Step in, Sir."

"No, no, Madam," he remonstrated. "Go in first and tell the prisoner that he is expected to accompany us."

"Well, as you please," she said with that apathy which had marked her conduct from the beginning. Taking the candle and stepping into the cell, she approached the inmate who lay on a straw tick and slept.

"Get up, Sir," she cried, gently shaking his shoulder. "They are here to take you away."

The captive started up and, for a moment, gazed around with bewilderment. Then, recollecting where he was, he jumped to his feet and cried:

"What is this? Is it not night, now? What do they mean by coming *now*? Do they even begrudge me a little slumber? Are they afraid to kill me in broad day-light?"

"I couldn't tell you, Sir. All I know is that they want you."

"But I won't go. If they want to murder me they may do it as well here as elsewhere."

The woman shrugged her shoulders.

"I have nothing to do with it," she said. "Here are the messengers: settle it with them."

With these words she stepped back, inviting Schultze with a gesture to take matters into his own hands. The pseudo-corporal was not slow to benefit by this invitation. He approached the prisoner in such a way as not only to turn his open back to the woman, but also to shade Robert's face. Then he whispered in a hurried voice in German: "Be watchful!" and immediately afterwards continued in French:

"Had you not better reflect before you attempt to resist us? Such resistance is entirely useless, for, much as we prefer persuasion, we are prepared to use force. Our orders are peremptory, and nothing on your part can hinder us from executing them."

He made his speech rather longer than necessary, to give Robert time to recover from his surprise. Nor was his precaution wholly superfluous; for so great was his astonishment on hearing Schultze's voice, that his self-control was on the point of leaving him. Indeed, so plainly were his emotions depicted on his face, that nothing but the caution of Schultze prevented a discovery. True, such a discovery would not necessarily have been fatal. They could have easily overcome the woman and made her harmless by imprisoning her in the same cell which Robert had occupied; but the thought of violence was too repugnant to be entertained without the most urgent necessity. Schultze, therefore, rejoiced to see his friend recover his self-possession in time to reply in that surly tone of which was so appropriate to the occasion:

"Oh! I have no doubt of your readiness to use force against a helpless prisoner. That is less perilous than to fight against my armed comrades in the field. Lead me where you please, then; I'll spare you the disgrace of forcing a defenseless captive."

Schultze motioned his men to surround Miller, and, after a hasty adieu to the woman, the band left the building. They marched with military precision, until they reached a dark alley, into which they could retire without fear of observation. There the overburdened heart of Miller threatened to give way. He was on the point of expressing his emotions, when Schultze pressed his hand and said:

"Not now, Robert, not now. We are too much in danger yet, to think of wasting time in gossip. Here, take this sword and this revolver. Then, don this military cloak and cap, to make you look as much like a French officer, as possible. We are a patrol you see, under your command, to inspect the ramparts. I think, we won't find much difficulty in discovering a hole, big enough for us to slip through."

"All right, lads," said Miller, entering into the views of his friends and yielding to the animating influence of his newly recovered freedom. "Fall into ranks! double file! shoulder arms! march!"

The command was given in French, Schultze's example showing the other's the motions. The small squad marched as before, avoiding, as much as possible, the public thoroughfares, and meeting all obstacles as unconcernedly as they could. Miller's perfect knowledge of French was now of great assistance to them. More than once they would have been betrayed without it. On arriving at the rampart, their situation became especially critical. They were hailed by an officer of higher rank.

"Qui vive?"

"La Patrouille."

"Who commands?"

"Lieutenant Delmont."

Robert knew in the hurry no other name.

"I thought Delmont had been captured at Wœrth."

"Non, Monsieur, I was only disabled by a flesh-wound."

"Ah! so much the better, or rather so much the worse; for you have only escaped to meet your fate after a few miserable weeks."

Robert did not understand him; nor did he care. All he wanted was to get rid of the dangerous companion.

"Any orders?" he inquired, touching his cap.

"No, I have ceased to give orders," the other said with a bitter laugh. "But what is the use of your patroling? Go, sleep or drink, and forget in the arms of Morpheus or Bacchus that to-morrow's sun will rise on a dishonored army."

He turned away, and Robert, glad to end the embarrassing interview, ordered his men to proceed. They found the ramparts and walls entirely deserted; but their astonishment at these

queer phenomena reached a climax, when they found even the gates of the fortress open and nobody there to impede their progress. They marched through, hardly knowing whether they were asleep or awake. The burning villages directed their steps. Before the expiration of twenty minutes, they were accosted by the familiar "wer da?" "Gut Freund!" was their reply, and, a few minutes later, they had the satisfaction of seing themselves surrounded by their enraptured comrades, the jægers.

After the first excitement had abated, and a host of questions been asked and answered, one of the officers inquired in a joking way:

"But, friends, why in the world did you go to all this trouble? Why did you not remain in town?"

"Remain in town?" inquired Robert in amazement. "You must think a French prison a paradise, and death by their bullets an enviable fate. I, for my part, beg leave to differ."

"Oh well, of course, you haven't heard the news. You didn't know—"

"Know what?" interrupted Robert, impatiently.

"The greatest military event since the days of Xerxes and Darius. *The fortress of Sedan, with the Emperor Napoleon and* 180,000 *men, has, this evening, surrendered to our army.*"

Miller and his companions stood aghast. Was it possible? The idea was almost too stupendous to be accepted by the doubting mind. But it was true, or their comrade would not have stated it so definitely. Now Robert understood the remarks of the French captain on the ramparts of Sedan. No wonder that he had spoken of a dishonored army, and advised his seeming comrade to spend the night in revelry. At what price could oblivion of the sad event be bought too dearly?

CHAPTER XVIII.

Let us now return to the mansion of the Sous-Prefect, and to the room, where we saw Napoleon III. giving audience. After the departure of Pauline and her kind protector, a stream of evil reports from the battle-field began to flow in without interruption.

Every messenger brought tidings of a more gloomy character, and the emperor, overwhelmed by his destiny, instructed Reille to turn off all further callers. The adjutants from the battle-field alone received audience.

"Bazailles has been taken and burned by the Bavarians," is the gloomy message of one.

"The enemy has attacked and taken Daigne," sounds the report of another.

"Floing is in flames. Our troops were incapable of holding it against the fierce attacks of the Prussians," announces a third one in accents of despair.

"The heights north of Sedan have been attacked and carried by the foe," is the last and most portentous message. Until then an avenue of escape, at least, had been open. He, and perhaps his army, could have made their escape to Belgium: now this avenue is blocked up, and an inexorable fate ready to put its seal upon his future. There he sits, the man with the illustrious name which, as much as his ability, placed him on the imperial throne of France. In the United States, in England, in Germany his career would have been an impossibility; but in France an empty name carried him to the summit of power. As he sits there, he shares the misfortune of France; but, while we pity the country, we deny our sympathy to the man of the second December. Yes, more than this: while we allow France the benefit of our good wishes, we cannot help feeling that, in a measure, she has brought this judgment upon herself. She was always an admirer of the hollow phrase, and fearfully has she been punished for this weakness.

But it was not of France I meant to speak. Let us rather pass with this greatest of all adventurers through the trying hours which preceded his fall from the imperial throne to the condition of the humblest private individual.

The battle rages with increasing fury around the fortress. Every moment the boom of cannon sounds more distinctly in his ears, and the bursting of German shells proclaim the dangerous proximity of his foes. What shall he do? Can he still escape to Belgium, or would it be more politic to surrender his person, and appeal to the magnanimity of King William?

For a while he is unable to form a resolution; but, all at once, he jumps from his chair and seizes a sword. The fire of his uncle flashes from his eyes, and he inquires of his adjutant:

"Where does the conflict rage most fiercely?"

"In the suburbs of Balan, Sire."

"Then let us hasten thither!"

The emperor and his adjutant hasten through the tumultuous streets. Nobody pays any attention to them, and they continue their way through the din and chaos of battle, until a litter, carried by soldiers, suddenly obstructs their way. Does Napoleon see right? Is that really the Duke of Magenta, once the famous hero of many battle-fields—now lying low in mental and physical agony; the former engendered by constant defeat in four weeks' battles; the latter created by the bursting of a shell, a piece of which inflicted a dangerous wound in his side?

Napoleon has no sooner recognized the marshal, when he hastens towards him and inquires after the nature of his wound.

"Rest easy, Sire," McMahon replies, in a stern voice. "The command is in good hands. I have surrendered it to General Wimpfen."

The soldiers again take up their precious burden; but, while they carry it to comparative security, Napoleon seeks Death on the most hotly-contested battle-field. He enters Balan which is badly pressed by the Bavarians. He draws his sword and joins a bold band which vainly struggles to resist the advance of the assailants. The conflict rages for hours, and every minute brings a more destructive hail-storm of cannon-balls and bomb shells; of bullets, canister and grape-shot. While hundreds of deadly missiles graze the emperor, he remains unhurt. Death, for whom he has provided such an ample repast, refuses to remove him from the theatre of his misdeeds.

The adjutant, meanwhile, trembles for his master's life. He exhorts, he begs, he implores him to retire from the carnage, and at last his efforts prevail.

The two retire from Balan, and, a few minutes afterwards, the glacis is in the hands of the Bavarians.

Napoleon returns to Sedan on the same route which witnessed his departure. Strange sights meet his eye at every step. Here

he sees thousands of soldiers who have renounced obedience to their superiors, threatening and cursing them to their heart's content; there he beholds an infuriated mob, revelling and pillaging, and converting a once quiet and orderly town into a place fit only for the refuse of mankind. Here and there the flames break through the walls and roofs, sending their hungry tongues far up into the air, as if they were anxious to draw the entire town into their pernicious embrace.

At last Napoleon reaches his quarters. The same room receives his weary body; but his desperate attempt has been unable to avert his fate. Every minute the portentous moment draws nearer and his gloomy thoughts appear to anticipate it in dark forebodings. He examines a map of Europe which lies before him on the table. Does he already, with prophetic vision, hunt the spot where he is soon to depend on the mercy of his conqueror?

All at once General Reille interrupts his thoughts.

"General Wimpfen," he announces, and, a minute later, the new commander stands before him.

"Well, General, what do you bring us?" the emperor exclaims, rising and stepping towards the visitor.

"Nothing; or, if you prefer it, *everything*," is the reply.

"You do not mean to say that everything is lost?"

"Your Majesty has said it."

"Impossible! impossible!" exclaims the emperor.

"Sire, war has no impossibilities."

"But this splendid army! this strong fortress! these provisions! this ammunition!"

"*This splendid army*?" retorts Wimpfen. "When I took command, I found nothing but an ungovernable rabble. *These provisions*? *this ammunition*? Ask those who were instructed to procure them. They *ought* to be on hand; but they are *not*, and without them: what do the strongest fortifications amount to? Besides, the entire army is ripe for mutiny."

"Impossible! impossible!" the emperor repeats.

This word offends the general who imagines to discover in it a declaration of distrust.

"If Your Majesty means by that, this it will be impossible for

me to hold this place, he is correct. I came to inform you of this impossibility. Please to accept my resignation of the post entrusted to me by the Marshal, and to give it to one more worthy of Your Majesty's confidence."

Napoleon has listened with an abstracted air. When Wimpfen stops, he starts and exclaims:

"What do you desire, General? I did not hear you."

"My resignation, Sire."

"Your resignation? Never! never!"

"But I am sure that I am unable to extricate Your Majesty and the army from this dilemma."

"If *you* cannot do it, nobody else can."

"It is not for me to judge about that."

"But for me! General, dear General! you will do your best?"

"Your Majesty may depend upon it," replied Wimpfen, excusing Napoleon's offensive doubts on account of his excitement. Then he takes his leave and, a moment afterwards, Napoleon is once more alone.

What fearful thoughts may have haunted the wretched man after this interview! Is it not likely that the misdeeds of his rule now passed in review before his mental eye? May he not have seen the victims of the 2nd December; the victims of Cayenne and of the many wars into which he plunged the French nation, either to tickle their vain-glory, or to improve his chances for a continued dynasty? All at once he starts, for he believes to have heard a noise behind him. With shy glances he turns around, and beholds two men who, in the obscurity of the back-ground, appear as much like ghosts as real men.

"Who is there?" Napoleon cries, jumping to his feet and staring at the apparition.

"Lieutenant-Colonel Bronsart and his adjutant," replies General Reille; "plenipotentiaries on the part of King William of Prussia. They desire to see the commander-in-chief."

"Show them to General Wimpfen," is the emperor's reply, and the three leave him.

Again he is alone; alone with his agonizing thoughts, the specters of the past. The furious cannonading has stopped during the interview; but the silence is more oppressive than the previ-

ous uproar, and he feels a kind of relief when, all at once, the battle begins to rage with its previous violence.

"So Wimpfen has declined their overtures," the emperor says to himself. "Affairs cannot be as bad as I apprehended."

Thus he hopes against hope; but half-an-hour has hardly elapsed, when Wimpfen sends in a message to the effect that the enemy will listen to nothing but an unconditional surrender, and that he sees no earthly outlet from the dilemma.

So everything is lost, after all! What can he do? He wishes to doubt Wimpfen's statement; but an inward voice convinces him of its correctness against his will.

"I consent to the renewal of negociations," he writes to the general, and the hand that has signed his name sinks powerless upon his knee. A deep, melancholy gloom seems to sink upon his spirit, and, for half-an-hour, he sits as immovable as a statue. Then, all at once, he raises his head; his eye flashes fire, and his lips smile, as if he felt that his old cunning had not entirely left him. Again he takes the pen, and this time he writes with a firm and steady hand:

"*Having failed to die at the head of my troops, I deposit my sword at the feet of Your Majesty.*"

The die is cast. He places himself at the mercy of his conqueror with a haste which, half-an-hour ago, he would probably have deemed impossible. What has wrought this sudden change? What induces Napoleon to surrender his person to King William, before Wimpfen has even completed the details of the capitulation? Nobody knows, for Napoleon III. is not the man to let the world look into the depths of his soul. But, what we do not know, we may conjecture. We know that intriguing is the emperor's second nature, and so we need not wonder, when we see that he approaches his conqueror in a role. He appeals to his generosity, and probably bases his plans of a future restoration upon the very act of his humiliation. This is one supposition. Another is that he feels no longer comfortable amongst his men. On his walk to Balan and back, he has heard queer language and seen strange sights amongst the soldiers. In confirmation of his suspicion, Wimpfen has assured him that the worst spirit of mutiny is rife amongst the men. No! he is no longer safe in the

midst of the nation which, for eighteen long years, bore his yoke with a patience surpassing the devotion with which the Hindoo suffers the wheels of the Juggernaut to crush his body. What shall we more marvel at, tnis unexampled forbearance on the part of a nation generally so touchy; or the consummate skill with which the despot managed to rule it? It is not his present mis-step at which we ought to wonder; but rather at his success in ruling the French as long as he actually did.

The above letter is sealed and dispatched through general Reille. Just as the sun approaches the horizon, the messenger returns with William's answer.

"It grieves me to meet Your Majesty in this way," the king replied. "At the same time I request you to name a plenipotentiary with whom the capitulation can be arranged. General Moltke and Count Bismark are authorized to conduct the negociations in my name.

WILLIAM."

Darkness sinks upon the regions, but many eyes are denied the sweet balm of slumber. Napoleon is not amongst the sleepers. After tossing restlessly upon his bed, the prey of hideous dreams and visions, he rises before day-light to dress, and then paces the floor of his cabinet for more than an hour. At last, when he hears the clock on the wall strike five, an uncontrolable impatience seizes him; it causes him to ring the bell and to order a carriage. Soon an open brougham, drawn by two horses, appears before the mansion. The emperor enters it and, accompanied by generals Reille, Castlenau, Vaubert and Moskwa, starts in the direction of Donchery, at which place he expects to meet King William.

In obedience to their instructions, Bismark and Moltke had gone to Donchery, the evening before, in order to open there the negociations with the French commissioners. These negociations had lasted till one o'clock P. M., when they were interrupted by Wimpfen's request of a short period of grace. This had been conceded. Bismark then had retired and was still asleep, when his adjutant entered his room with the announcement that general Reille had arrived and reported his master's desire to see the count. Bismark arose; after dressing with the greatest

dispatch he mounted his horse and galloped away to meet his distinguished guest.

The salutation was polite, but distant. Both parties lifted their caps and Bismark dismounted.

"May I ask Your Majesty's pleasure?" he inquired.

"I desire to see the king."

"I regret that this cannot be done without some delay. The king has returned to his head-quarters at Vendresse."

"I share your regret, Sir Count, as it was not my intention to return to Sedan."

"In that case I shall be most happy to cede my lodgings to Your Majesty."

"I accept your offer," replied the emperor and both parties started for the town. When they were still a few hundred yards from the bridge leading across the Meuse, Napoleon noticed a little one-story building on the left-hand side of the road, whose isolated situation seemed to please him, for he turned to Bismark and said:

"This house suits our purpose admirably. Could Your Excellency grant me an interview in its walls?"

"I am entirely at Your Majesty's disposal," replied the count and alighted from his horse. Napoleon at once left the carriage and the two entered the house to which later generations will point with interest; for there an interview took place which history will always chronicle amongst its most remarkable events.

The building hardly deserved the appellation of a house. Hut would have been more appropriate. It belonged to a poor man who followed the humble vocation of a weaver. The furniture was in keeping with the house. The room into which Bismark and Napoleon entered contained a pine-table and two reed-bottom chairs. It received its light from one little window; but, as the apartment itself was small, the two occupants found sufficient light for their purpose.

Their followers all remained outside, and, as neither of the two participants has divulged the exact words in which the conversation was clothed, I cannot possibly render it to the reader. This we know that the interview never lost the character of a business-conference. It hinged upon the conditions of the pre-

sent capitulation and the later negociations of peace. While Bismark, on the one hand, refused to change Moltke's terms, Napoleon, on the other, pretended to have no right, as a prisoner, to accept any propositions of peace whatever; but that all negociations tending that way, must be necessarily directed to the regency in Paris. Thus the interview bore no fruits whatever. After the expiration of an hour, the two reappeared before the door. There the emperor made a last attempt to secure more lenient conditions for his army.

"Could you not possibly allow it to be marched across the Belgian frontier, to be disarmed and interned for the duration of the war?" he inquired.

"I regret to be obliged to repeat that I have no power to alter Moltke's terms."

"I am sorry that I am not able to secure better terms for the poor fellows."

"So am I; but war is, at best, a game over which the generals allow us Statesmen but little control. I regret deeply that it was commenced, and I derive satisfaction from the fact that I was not instrumental in bringing it about."

Napoleon cast a searching glance at the count and said:

"You insinuate that *we* were the beginners; but I assure you that it was begun against my own desire, and that I was driven into it by public opinion."

At this moment a couple of Prussian officers made their appearance, and informed the count that they had visited the castle of Bellevue near Frenois, and found it well adapted for Napoleon's interview with King William. Bismark gave his consent, and the whole party at once started towards the castle. A company of cuirassiers from William's body-guard escorted the party to the castle, where Napoleon at once retired to his quarters, while Bismark attended the conference between General Wimpfen and the German plenipotentiary. When Mo'tke shortly afterwards arrived with the king's consent to the stipulations of the capitulation, the papers were signed by both parties, and, soon afterwards, delivered to the king.

William now no longer objected to meet the emperor; or rather it may be safely said that Bismark and Moltke no longer objected.

They seem to have feared that Napoleon would meet the old king unawares, and plead so powerfully with the generous-hearted prince as to secure conditions not warranted by the situation. Perhaps William himself was apprehensive of such an occurrence; at all events, although the privilege in question was not expressly denied the emperor, things were managed in such a way as to effectually deprive him of it.

It was one o'clock, when the king started from Vendresse. He was accompanied by the Crown-Prince, and escorted by his mounted body-guard. When they reached Bellevue, the clock struck two. The castle is surrounded by a beautiful park and commands a splendid view of the town of Sedan and the valley of the Meuse. When the king approached the building, Napoleon, bare-headed, descended the stone steps and saluted his royal conqueror.

It was a meeting as momentuous as the one above described. The spectators could hardly gaze upon the two princes without feeling convinced that thus, and only thus the interview should have shaped itself in accordance with the laws of justice. On one side they beheld the high and vigorous form of the king, unbent by threescore and ten; on the other they noticed the insignificant figure of the emperor, impaired by chronic diseases. The parents of the former had once been grossly insulted by the uncle of the latter; yes, King William himself had, only four weeks ago, been snubbed by the express order of the man who now stood before him, a prisoner of war, humble and penitent not from choice, but from compulsion. The opportunity of revenge was now at hand; but it never entered the mind of the generous-hearted king to benefit by it. True, he avenged himself, but only by heaping fiery coal upon his adversary's head. He received him kindly and with the symptoms of deep emotion plainly depicted on his face. "The visit," he wrote to Queen Augusta, "lasted a quarter of an hour. We were both deeply moved by this meeting. I cannot find words for all my emotions at the thought of the change which three short years have brought over Napoleon."

After this interview King William remounted his horse to ride around Sedan and inspect his army as well as his spoils. Napo-

leon remained at Bellevue until the next day, when he left the place with a retinue becoming the sovereign rather than the prisoner. Eighteen carriages, filled with French officers; eighty grooms with spare horses, and a squadron of black hussars formed the memorable train which escorted the emperor across the Belgian frontier. At Libramont he took the railway, using an extra train which had been ordered for his special accomodation. From there the locomotive took him through Belgium, Rhenish Prussia, Hesse-Cassel, until, at last, it stopped at the depot of the city of Cassel. Here again the railway-car was exchanged for the carriage, which, in turn, deposited the prisoner at Wilhelmshœhe, the famous villa near the Hessian capital. At this very same castle the prisoner's uncle, the merry Jerome, had, sixty years ago, played his gay role as King of Westphalia. It was a beautiful residence which the generosity of King William had provided for the fallen sovereign: bnt could an avenging Nemesis have chosen a more appropriate dwelling-place? At Wilhelmshœhe we leave the brooding emperor to return to the theatre of war, where new events pass over the stage with the same rapidity which forms so prominent a feature of this remarkable war.

CHAPTER XIX.

The news of the surrender at Sedan fell with a crushing force upon Paris, and produced an agitation which the empire was unable to resist. When Palicao, on the 4th of September, made the official announcement in the legislature, Jules Favre moved the deposition of Napoleon and the appointment of a provisional committee of defense. The motion was carried and the republic proclaimed from the city-hall amidst the wildest acclamations of the multitude. To Trochu the defense of the capital was entrusted; but while moderate and able men like Jules Favre, Jules Ferry, Garnier-Pages, numbered amongst the members of the new government, it received a farcial, and almost buffoon-like

character by the admixture of a Gambetta and a Rochefort. The first step was an appeal to the patriotism of the French nation. The people were summoned to rally around the standard of the republic, in order to drive the invaders from the country. Proclamation followed proclamation, and, amongst these official manifestoes, numerous private addresses made their appearance.

To prove to the reader that these addresses were frequently of the silliest character, we need only point to the famous letter of Victor Hugo to the German people, a document which, for bombast, childishness and want of sense, vainly seeks its equal on the wide field of literature.

It can, however, not be denied that the new government developed considerable energy. Its members did everything in their power to make new levies, to raise the necessary funds, and to check the advance of the German armies. That they failed in the latter attempt, must be ascribed to the inadequacy of their means rather than their want of exertion. In many instances, however, these exertions were misdirected. Wishing to impede and retard the progress of the German armies, the committee, or their agents, caused public works of great value and beauty to be destroyed. Bridges were blasted, tunnels blocked, woods burnt, shade-trees hewed down, cottages devastated, villages deserted, and property of every description wantonly destroyed. These measures amused rather than annoyed the invaders, and in slow but steady marches the victors of Sedan approached Paris. The new government did not await their arrival. Leaving Trochu, Jules Favre and Gambetta in the threatened city, it removed, on the 16th of September, to Tours, accompanied by the representatives of all nations, excepting Washburn, the American envoy, who remained in Paris, determined to watch the interests of his numerous country-men, living in that city. The Empress Eugenie had left the Tuilleries as early as the fourth, and so thoroughly did the enraged and fickle nation destroy every trace of the once glorious empire, that, by the middle of September, no trace of it met the eye.

However, it was only a portion of the German forces that marched against the capital. 150,000 men were left before Metz, while, at the same time, a large contingent of South-German

troops were detached to push the siege of Strasburg, and a few other fortresses of smaller size and less importance. Reserving the description of these movements for a future occasion, we now join the columns of the army which approached and finally invested Paris on the 17th of September.

To invest a city like Paris is no small undertaking. Protected first by a ditch and wall, and secondly by a number of strong forts lying outside of this wall, it requires a line of troops sixty miles in length to complete the investment. To draw the German army out into such a line would have rendered it, not only useless, but also liable to be broken by the besieged at any time and place. The German generals therefore adopted a different policy. They stationed their troops in heavy columns on the north and south of Paris, placing only a few corps of observation on the east, and employing heavy cavalry divisions on the west-side to interrupt all communications with the rest of France. At the same time the troops began without delay and with great energy the construction of the famous girdle of batteries and rifle-pits, by means of which they were able to repulse all the sorties of the besieged.

We may well imagine that the latter did not suffer them to proceed without frequent attempts to annoy and harass them. Even as early as the 17th French troops attacked the Germans north of the forest of Bouvannes, but were driven back with ease. On the 18th, Bicetre was the scene of an unimportant conflict; but, on the 19th, General Ducrot made a vigorous attack upon the German lines on the heights of Sceaux. His forces consisted of four divisions which had crossed the Seine at Villeneuve-St.-George. On the German side Prussian and Bavarian regiments participated in the battle, which was mainly fought for the possession of the new earth-works erected on the heights. Our old friends the jægers also took part in it, and fought with their wonted bravery. The struggle was short, but hotly contested. It resulted in the loss of the works and seven cannons for the French who retreated in disorder to Paris.

This battle was followed by an abortive attempt at peace on the part of the French Government. On the 19th of September, Jules Favre asked for a safe-guard to the German head-quarters.

His request being granted, he met Bismark at Ferrieres on the 19th and 20th to open negociations. He demanded an armistice in order to convoke the National Assembly; but when Bismark insisted on the surrender of Strasburg, Toul and Verdun as a guarantee for the sincerity of the French, the Parisian Government refused to acceed to these demands. I do not pretend to reflect on their refusal; but if the reader considers that these fortresses actually surrendered within one week from that date, he will surely not find the demands of the German Councilor ex orbitant. Perhaps the French might really have accepted them, if Bismark had not definitely demanded the cession of Alsace and Lorraine as the first condition of peace. To accept this the French Government was not yet sufficiently humbled. It took another and severer lesson to convince them that the rendition of the old German provinces had become an unavoidable necessity. For the present they indignantly refused to listen to such overtures, and Gambetta began to issue those inflammatory appeals and proclamations to the French nation whose fiery tone was only exceeded by their mendacity.

While these negociations were pending, the German troops were by no means idle. They fortified their position, repaired the railroads leading to the German frontier, and built new ones to facilitate the communication between the various besieging corps.

The Parisian troops, for a while, remained comparatively inactive. Now and then a skirmish took place which hardly deserves the name of a fight, but was invariably magnified into a great victory by the Parisian press. On the 30th of September, however, a serious sortie was attempted. Great bodies of infantry emerged from the city and attacked the German works; but they were repulsed after a two hours struggle, without even the interference of the German reserves. The French left two hundred prisoners in the hands of the victors, and sustained other losses of consequence.

Yet this reverse did not discourage them. As early as October the first, they renewed their attacks, continuing them on the second, when two divisions deployed from Fort Bicetre and assaulted the village of Noisy le Noi, where the Germans had for-

tified themselves. The latter were too weak to resist them; they even saw themselves compelled to abandon a battery which however the French were unable to take along for want of horses. Their principal intention seemed to be the destruction of the bridge leading across the Seine at that place; but the lively fire of the Germahs prevented them from carrying out their design, and after a bloody struggle they were compelled to fall back behind the forts, having sustained a loss of many dead, wounded and prisoners

But it oversteps the limits of this story to dwell upon all the bloody encounters of the long and memorable siege of the French capital. Moreover it is time to look once more after our friends, the American volunteers, as well as Major Haller and the brave jægers under his command.

We find them all quartered in the village of Choisy on the Seine, south of Paris, forming a link of the iron chain which surrounded the city. Choisy had been deserted like all other places around Paris, and the jægers had managed to install themselves in the most magnificent lodgings. They lived in fine villas and palaces, dined from porcelain of Sevres, and constantly unearthed large quantities of wine which had been burried by the inhabitants before their flight, in the vain hope that they might thus escape the shar[illegible] of the invaders. Colonel and private lodged alike and dr[illegible] troop[illegible] and very frequently they dined alike; for more than [illegible] but were[illegible]s ran short and the general was glad to share the pe[illegible]ne of an u[illegible]d rye-bread of the common soldier.

The service of a besieging army is tedious in the extreme. The soldiers always hate and fear it. They much prefer the active campaign with its forced marches and bloody battles; for, if the marches are fatiguing, they bring at least change and variety; if the battles are bloody, they also create that wild excitement which engenders recklessness and disregard of danger. But to lie in the same quarters week after week, month after month; to dig trenches; to listen to the roar of the enemy's cannons and to the whizz of his bomb-shells without the privilege of replying; to stand opposite his pickets and form a target for his bullets with the strict order to abstain from retalia-

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tion: these things are calculated to try the soldier's patience. No wonder that, under such circumstances, he is glad, when it is his turn to do the most arduous duty; no wonder, when, worried by tediousness, he plays practical jokes upon his comrades and benefits by every chance which promises to bring a change into the dull routine of his life. Under these circumstances the discovery of a new subterranean treasure always creates a jubilee. The kegs or bottles are eyed with loving glances; they ary carefully carried into quarters and stored away to celebrate the news of any new victory promulgated through the lines. This subjects the men to almost daily libations, but they bear their lot with the resignation of the true soldier. On extraordinary occasions they even double their exertions to do justice to their comrades' successes. The announcement of the surrender of Strasburg, for example, roused the patriotic spirit of our friends to the highest pitch, and induced them to break the neck of innumerable bottles of excellent claret.

The two Americans and Haller occupied rooms in the same building. Since the adventure of Sedan the bond of friendship which united them seemed to have grown in strength every day. Especially Miller and Haller appeared to be drawn towards each other with a secret force for which they themselves perhaps failed to account; but whose cause the reader will, no doubt, discover in a moderate sadness, a melancholy penchant to which both had yielded. They did not complain of anything; they never made their mood the subject of conversation; but it certainly existed, greatly to the annoyance of Schultze who often scolded them for what he called their blues and labored incessantly to revive their flagging spirits.

The month of October brought the sorties above mentioned; but it brought also the most beautiful weather imaginable. The sun shone with summer heat upon the charming landscape, and matured the most delicious fruit. Luscious grapes ripened in the vineyards; apples, pears and plums of great variety and excellence in the orchards, without busy hands to gather them. True, the German soldiers tried their best to do justice to nature's bounty; but they could only manage a small portion

of the abundance, and car-loads of the finest fruit rotted on the ground.

As the month wore away there was a growing desire on the part of the besiegers to take the city, or, at least, to receive definite information regarding its real condition, and its ability of holding out. Haller, who possessed the confidence of Frederic William, was always posted on the plans of the commander, and often made the condition of affairs the topic of conversation with his two friends, when he could do so without breach of confidence.

"Moltke is greatly worried about Paris," he said, one evening, as they sat together in his room and emptied a bottle of claret.

"I see no cause for it," suggested Schultze, with a shrug of his shoulders. "We'll get it sooner or later, I am sure."

"Be not *too* sure of that," replied Haller. We must not forget that we besiege the capital of France with hostile France behind our back."

"Hostile but powerless."

"Not so powerless as to be harmless."

"Are not her armies captured or invested ?"

"New ones are forming every day,"

"Pshaw! Raw levies: you see things too black."

"I see them as they are; as Moltke sees them. With 150,000 men tied up at Metz; with 50,000 holding open our line of communication; with 300,000 lying around Paris, we are really not in a position to despise the desperate efforts of the French to raise new armies north and south of us. One battle lost, and the siege of Paris is a failure."

"One battle *lost*! You forget that we are not in the habit of losing battles."

"We are not invincible. The greatest bravery may sometimes yield to numbers."

"But is not General Tann driving the French with greatly inferior numbers."

"He is at present; but we cannot reinforce him and his adversary is daily growing in strength. It is the very position of Tann at Orleans which creates the apprehension of Moltke. I heard rom his own mouth that he considers his position exposed."

"Well, he ought to know, of course; but we have whipped these fellows so constantly that defeat seems almost impossible."

The next morning brought the news of Bazaine's surrender at Metz; but it announced also the defeat of General Tann at Orleans, thus verifying the correctness of Moltke's apprehension. It was indeed fortunate for the German cause that Frederic Charles and his army had been released from their tedious task at Metz in time to repair the loss of Orleans, and to check the combined movements of the French armies on Paris. But while this circumstance defeated the well-laid plan of relieving Paris, it did not lessen Moltke's desire to obtain correct information regarding the condition of the city and its ability of sustaining a prolonged siege. Of course, he discredited the pompous reports brought from Paris by means of balloons, boasting of the excellent morale of the inhabitants as well as their abundant supplies; but, on the other hand, he found it impossible to obtain iuformation reliable enough to base on it exact calculations. In vain did he examine the prisoners which Trochu invariably left behind after his abortive attempts of breaking through the German lines. They either gave too gloomy or too sanguine a picture of the city to deserve belief. On one occasion several German officers, who had been captured, were released, after having been led through the French magazines, and shown the ample supplies at Trochu's disposal. But this measure also looked too much like a trick; too much like a desire of creating certain impressions to carry much weight. It was an indisputable fact that the true condition of the Parisians was enveloped in a veil which the sharpest eye could not penetrate sufficiently to warrant true and unerring calculations.

The preceding conversation had first drawn Miller's attention to this fact. Subsequent remarks had served to fix his thoughts upon the subject, until, at length, he conceived the idea and formed the resolution of going to Paris in disguise in order to gain the information so much coveted. His desire of serving his country by this dangerous undertaking was, no doubt, seconded by a morbid state of mind which the participation of Pauline Delmont in the Sedan adventure had brought about. He had certainly shown a recklessness since that event which had more

than once alarmed his friends and was indicative of an utter indifference of life and all dangers threatening it. Knowing that Haller and Schultze would strenuously oppose so hazardous an enterprise, Miller abstained from making them confidents of his plans, until they were too well matured to be abandoned. His first step was, of course, to gain the consent of Moltke, who stayed at the head-quarters of the king in Versailles. The distance from Choisy to that city is not great. One afternoon Miller saddled his horse and, after a short but rapid ride, found himself in the presence of the great strategian. The old general shook his head, when he heard the proposition of the young lieutenant.

"Your idea is not bad," he said; "but I fear it cannot be carried into effect. I praise your zeal, however, and shall not forget your readiness to serve yonr country in so perilous an undertaking."

"I think you over-estimate the danger," replied Miller.

"Over-estimate it?" inquired Moltke, with a smile. "You seem to forget the passion of the Parisians for hanging German spies. The danger cannot well be over-estimated."

"I am willing, yes, even anxious to risk it. You will bestow a favor upon me by granting my request."

"Are you so tired of life, then, young man?"

"I do not value it so highly as not to sacrifize it for my country."

"Well said; but, supposing I were willing to listen to your proposal: have you already formed a plan?"

"I have, General."

"Well, let me hear. It can do no harm to listen to what you have to say."

Miller now informed the general how his attention had first been drawn to the subject.

"I had no regular plan until yesterday," he continued. "We did picket-duty along the river, the night before last, and, when I examined the different guards, I thought I heard a low noise on the water which aroused my suspicion and induced me to challenge it. I received no reply; but, determined to satisfy myself as to the correctness of my supposition, I lit a torch, which we kept

in readiness for emergencies, and, by its light. really discovered a skiff with one man in it who tried his best to escape down stream, but failed to make much headway on account of the necessary secrecy of his motions. I challenged him to surrender; but, instead of complying, he doubled his efforts to get away. As secrecy was no longer necessary, he increased his speed and would probably have made his escape, if at last the bullet of a sentinel had not laid him low. He fell into the bottom of the skiff, and, of course, was beyond harm; but, as the current would take him into Paris, and, as he could possibly be the bearer of dispatches, I ordered a few of my men to enter a skiff, and secure the vessel with the body. They soon brought him ashore; but, although we examined him with the greatest care, we could discover nothing but this letter, which he carried in his breast-pocket. It seems the poor lad came from Southern France, and fell a victim to his inordinate desire of entering Paris."

"That ought to be a warning to you," said Moltke, with a smile, while he took and opened the letter which Miller handed him.

"Ah! but he fell a victim to *German* vigilance. I shall find less difficulty in deceiving the French."

"Don't be too sanguine about that," warned Moltke. Then, holding the note to the window, he read:

CORBEIL, OCT. 20th, 1870.

TO MR. ETIENNE PORDU.

My dear Etienne.

I write these few lines to introduce to you our common nephew, Henry Bouvois. He arrived from Marseilles last week. He is anxious to serve his country; but he also wants to see Paris and his cousin Emily. I think he still loves her, although the children parted when quite young. We tried our best to dissuade him; but, when we saw that he was determined to try, we gave him all the assistance in our power. We procured him a skiff, as it is his intention to go down the Seine, and pass the German lines in a dark night. May God preserve him, and may His Holy Mother take you all into her safe keeping in this your hour of trial. Fearing that you are suffering from want, we fill the boat with provisions of all kinds, and hope sincerely that you may enjoy them and use them in good health.

We are glad to hear that the invaders have been defeated near Orleans, and that powerful efforts are being made to relieve the city. Be of good cheer, therefore, and hold out a little longer.

The day is surely near at hand which will signally defeat our enemies.

Begging you to accept through me the best wishes of my husband Anatole, and of Charles, Emil, Louise and Marie, our children, I sign myself, most affectionately,

Your sister,
HELOISE DUVAL.

"I see now," said Moltke, folding and returning the letter. "You want to pass for Monsieur Henry Bouvois, and conquer the heart of little Emily. The plan is certainly more romantic than feasible. Do you understand French?"

"Yes, General."

"Your accent would, nevertheless, betray you."

"I think not, Sir. When a boy, I had a French nurse, and, so well did I succeed in acquiring the characteristics of the language, that the good dame often called me a perfect little Frenchman. Since that I have had several opportunities of perfecting my French; yes, I am confident that I can sufficiently imitate the dialect of Marseilles to pass for a native of that town."

Moltke remained silent, but his pensive brow showed plainly that he pondered on the proposition. At length he raised his head, and said:

"You have succeeded in infecting me with your spirit of adventure. With such eminent talents at your command, you may carry this enterprise to a happy termination. I must admit that such information would be invaluable to me."

"Then, why with-hold your consent."

"I do not with-hold it; I only hesitate to give it. I dislike to jeopardize a valuable life in such a game of chance."

"Then you authorize me to make the trial?"

"Well, I suppose I have to," replied Moltke, with a smile. "Of course, I expect you to abstain from all unnecessary exposure."

"I pledge my word to be as prudent as I can."

"Then have your way about it. Can I assist you in anything?"

"Not particularly. You might give me a pass through our lines."

"Such a pass would be your death-warrant on the other side."

"Of course, it would; but I can destroy the paper as soon as it has served its purpose."

Moltke took a pen and wrote a few lines which he handed Miller. Then he offered his hand to the young man, and said kindly:

"Now, farewell to you, my friend. I sincerely hope that we shall meet again, partly for my sake, but chiefly for yours. You had better betray this to nobody, for we do not know in what way the news might reach Paris, provided they once leaked out here."

Miller promised to be cautions, and then departed. At first he was inclined to obey Moltke's order so strictly as to exclude even Haller and Schultze from his confidence; but, after mature reflection he concluded that it would be better to draw them into the secret, as his sudden disappearance, for which nobody could account, would be apt to create suspicion and attract attention The only thing he feared, was that they would disapprove of his intention; therefore his previous consultation with Moltke. His supposition proved but too correct. Schultze scolded and Haller reproached, until Miller, at last, drew forth his pass-port and thereby cut short the entire controversy.

"'Tis no use, you see," he said, with a melancholy smile. "So, instead of scolding, you had better assist me. First and foremost, I want a suit and outfit adapted to a young man of my condition. I follow fishing as a trade, you see, and, as a fisherman, I want things in a fisherman's fashion. Next, I want a good skiff and plenty of provisions, to say nothing about the fish with which the vessel must be amply stocked. Last, but not least, I need a net and angel; for, though I do not intend following the profession in the city, I must have everything calculated to engender confidence in me and my pretended calling."

In this way he warded off his friends' reproaches. They continued to grumble; but they fared like Moltke, that is, they were in a measure infected with the spirit which had engendered the enterprise. At first Schultze insisted upon sharing the perils of the trip as Robert's companion.

"That will never do," said Miller, laughing. "I might as well attempt to pass an elephant for a weasel, as you for a native of the sunny south of France. Leaving alone your Saxon *ang*, *eng* and *ung*, you are big enough to cut half-a-dozen children of Mar-

seilles out of you. No, no; Paris is not large enough to hide such giants."

Haller nodded with a smile, and Schultze was compelled to renounce his fraternal idea. To indemnify himself, however, he entered, with all his energy, into the procurement of the necessary outfit. After securing a suitable skiff, he went with Miller to Versailles, and assisted him in selecting a supply of clothes adapted to the calling of a fisherman. The net and angel they easily procured at Choisy; nor was there any difficulty in obtaining fish from the few inhabitants who had remained in the place. The other provisions, such as hams, sugar, tea and coffee they bought at Versailles, paying for the same in good, hard thalers with which Moltke had secretly supplied them. At last, when everything was ready, Miller donned his new suit, put on a broad-brimmed hat, such as fishermen wear, and, after an affectionate farewell to Haller, set out for the river, in Schultze's company, as soon as the last rays of twilight had melted into darkness.

CHAPTER XX.

"And now," said Schultze, when the moment of parting had come, "tell me, when we may expect you back?—provided you come back at all."

"That depends entirely on my success."

"And you have received no instructions in regard to this?"

"I have not. Moltke had confidence enough in me to leave that to my own discretion."

"A hint that I oughtn't to be more assuming than he. Well, I suppose I have to content myself with that vague promise. Confound this great bulk that prevents me from mingling with ordinary men without being stared at by everybody! Good-bye, Bob, good-bye, and may God preserve you!"

He turned to hide his emotion, and went back to his quarters, where he was heard to mutter sentences for the next three or

four days in a most unintelligible manner. His servant, who was best acquainted with his ways, pretended to have understood "never back! never come back!" but *he*, too, was by no means sure of it, and, at last, set it down as one of the many whims with which, according to his belief, his master was afflicted.

Robert, in the meantime, pursued his dangerous path with the necessary caution. The German lines projected as far as Vitry and Maisons, that is, about two English miles from his starting point. Yet he observed the greatest caution. He might, on being challenged, have given the watch-word; but such an occurrence would soon have spread along the lines like wild-fire, thus defeating one of the most indispensable conditions for a successful termination of the enterprise: secrecy. Fortunately the night was very dark and nothing interrupted his progress, until flashes from the cannons of Fort Ivry on his left and Fort Charenton on his right, betrayed to him the fact that he was within the French lines. This, however, did not induce him to slacken his vigilance; for, as Paris was his point of destiny, it would have suited him badly to be thus early stopped and examined.

Fortunately, nothing interrupted his progress. He passed the forts which lie nearly a mile from the banks of the river, and, fifteen minutes later, reached the spot where the Marne effects its junction with the Seine. The increase of water produces a swifter current, a circumstance which Miller could distinctly discern from the greater rapidity with which his skiff passed the prominent points of the shore. Such points (houses, steeples, trees, &c.) also guided him in maintaining the center of the river. Using his oar as a rudder, he succeeded in keeping at a safe distance from the banks, until, all at once, massive walls, pushed forth to the very edge of the water, betraying the unwelcome fact that he had reached the dangerous circumvallation of the city. He did not know, whether the river was obstructed here or not. He had, moreover, reasons to expect an encounter with some person or other at this place or under the bridges below; but, while he prepared for such a meeting, he hoped that his good fortune would lead him into the city without interference or delay. Nor was he disappointed. The railroad bridge was passed like the wall, and nobody noticed or paid any at-

tention to, the little craft and its inmate. He continued his way, until the few spare lanterns on both sides of the river diffused sufficient light to bring into view the prominent features of the banks. Robert was too familiar with Paris not to know his whereabouts; so he took the oars and propelled his boat to his right, until he reached a low quay to which a large number of skiffs and boats were tied. The quay consisted of an inclined plane, which finally changed into a street, on whose remote side warehouses, intermixed with smaller dwellings, were dimly visible. Robert stepped from his boat to the nearest lantern, drew out his letter, and read: Monsieur Etienne Pordu, No. 123, Rue St. Paul.

"Rue St. Paul?" he muttered to himself. "The deuce may take it! Who can recollect all the streets of Paris! But stop! Rue St. Paul! Wasn't that the street in which my friend and fellow-conspirator Flourens used to live? If so, my conspiring has at least done me one good turn. Not that I would wish to trust him under the present circumstances—I fear I cannot trust the best of them—but my acquaintance with him has put me on the track of an uncle whose habitation is about as hard to find as my claims to kin to be established. If my supposition is correct, the street must be very near, and I shall have leisure to hunt Monsieur Pordu, and return to the boat before the grasping people of Paris have annexed my treasures. Let me see what time it is."

He pulled a watch from his pocket and let the light of the lantern fall upon its face. It was three o'clock, then, too early under ordinary circumstances to rouse the inmates of a house, but, in Robert's estimation, pardonable under the present circumstances. His lately acquired uncle, Monsieur Pordu, would hardly object to be wakened so early, as this disturbance was the only safe way of securing for him the valuable stores in the boat. Robert, therefore, at once began his search. At first he found it difficult to decipher the streets in the dim lamp-light; but, as he proceeded, the recollection of olden times came with full force, and he was enabled to make his way without any other assistance than that of his memory. At last, after a search of half-an-hour, which led him considerably in a circle, he was fortunate enough to discover St. Paul Street, and, shortly afterwards, No. 123. It was a

house of very modest pretensions and hardly calculated to elate our friend with his newly acquired relations. But the character of a house is not always indicative of the inmate's, and Robert was rather pleased with the humble appearance of affairs than otherwise; because he considered it easier to maintain his incognito with ignorant than educated people. But, however this might be, it surely was too late now to change tactics and, giving the door bell a hearty jerk, Robert awaited the result of the measure. He heard the clink of the bell with great distinctness; but nobody else seemed to notice it, for ten minutes elapsed without bringing a response to the call.

"Nothing like perseverance!" muttered Robert to himself, and repeated the manœuvre. His second effort was followed by a third one; but only when he quickened the different pulls into a continued ding-dong, a step on the stairs within betrayed the final awakening of the inmates.

"Mon Dieu! who is that out there?" inquired a pleasant maiden-voice. "To make such a fuss in the dead of night! Who is it, I say?"

Robert at once divined that the voice belonged to his new cousin, Emily. He was rather pleasantly surprised to receive the first welcome from her, so he moderated his voice as much as possible and said through the key-hole:

"It is I, your cousin Henry from Marseilles. You are Emily, are you not? If so, open the door, but quietly, for it is not necessary to trumpet my arrival to the neighbors before to-morrow."

The person inside evidently had heard about such a cousin; for she uttered a low cry of surprise, and at once began to unfasten the door. To judge from the time it took her to accomplish this, affairs seemed to be rather perilous in Paris just then. Besides turning the key twice, she withdrew several bolts, and then opened the door sufficiently wide to let a ray of her tallow candle fall upon the figure of the outsider. This examination seemed to prove favorable for the applicant; for the door was opened more widely, and a pleasant countenance smiled upon the stranger.

"So you are Cousin Henry?" she inquired. "Well, I suppose

you must be, or you wouldn't have known my name and residence. But come in Henry. I am sure this is rude in me to let you stand in the night-air so long! It wasn't intentional, tho'; for we all have been expecting you so long and wondered why in the world you didn't come. Just now, however, we didn't look for you; for these are dreadful times and I should think the folks in Marseilles would be glad enough to stay where they are, instead of mixing in this fearful turmoil here. Not that you are any the less welcome for that! Indeed, you are rather more so, for I presume you're come to comfort and assist us in this awful crisis. Now sit down, cousin, and make yourself at home, and then tell me, how in the world you have managed to elude these horrible Prussians, and why you come in the dead of night, and how in the world you have managed to find our house. But you don't speak, cousin: what is the reason, pray?"

"A very good reason, *ma cousine*," replied Robert, with a gay laugh. "Two pretty lips have done the speaking all this time so pleasantly and so successfully, that it would have been a sheer impossibility to put in a word myself."

"Ah! cousin, you are making fun of me; that isn't fair," she said with a pout.

"No, indeed, I am not," protested Robert. "I was so well pleased with your effort, that I felt not the slightest inclination to interrupt you. I would at any time rather hear a pretty maiden than speak myself."

"Ah! now you *flatter*, Monsieur Henry, and that is worse than mockery. If you continue that way, I'll have a fine report to make to father when he rises in the morning."

"So you intend to leave him ignorant of my arrival?" inquired Robert, with such manifest suspense that the girl could not help noticing it.

"Well, does not my humble self suffice Monseigneur that long?" she inquired with a piqued air. "I am surprised, cousin, to see so many vices develop themselves in you in so short a time. First sarcasm, then flattery, then want of gallantry: what next, Monsieur?"

"You judge me too severely, Cousin Emily," he said with a laugh, but showing unmistakable signs of pleasure at her grace-

ful, naive manners. "You will accuse me of flattery again, I fear; but I can nevertheless not refrain from telling you that you are the nicest, sweetest, prettiest little cousin a man can well demand, and that I would not object to spending my whole life on a desert island with you. Is that satisfactory?"

"It will do, Monsieur. But, if you are sincere in your professions, why did you open your eyes so wide, when I informed you that you wouldn't meet papa before the morning?"

"Because it is absolutely necessary, little cousin, that I *should* see him before morning. I have important communications to make and the sooner he hears them the better for us all."

"But what is it, cousin?" she said with the greatest curiosity manifest in her mien. "I love secrets, indeed I do. Oh! sweet cousin Henry, just tell me yours a minute before telling papa!"

"Indeed I won't, fair cousin. By telling secrets that way, they lose in value. So, if you are anxious to learn mine, you'll have to call all the others, your father, your—"

"Oh! we are all alone now, Henry. Since mother's death papa has retired from business, you know, and we are just by ourselves, excepting occasional visitors, such as—"

"Well, such as?"

"Oh! never mind them! They are of no importance now. 'Tis father we want, for on *his* appearance hinges the appearance of the secret. Cousin, please to excuse me a moment."

She slipped from the room, and Robert could not help sending an admiring glance after her. Such freshness; such beauty; such wit, freedom and innocence combined he had not seen for a long time. *One* instance he did recollect; but this recollection filled him with pain and not with pleasure. The girl of whom he thought then, combined more polish with these qualities; but this polish had proved treacherous and filled his heart with bitterness at the very sight of woman. In the present instance, however, his feelings lacked this bitterness, and he looked after his pseudo-cousin with interest. For this we can easily account. The perilous position into which he had plunged himself had animated his whole being and given his thoughts and emotions an intensity and acuteness foreign to the even tenor of every-day life. Under such circumstances man resembles the taper burning in pure oxy-

gen. It burns more brilliantly; but is also consumed more rapidly.

In Robert's feelings of admiration, however, there was an admixture of apprehension. He had already been on the point of betraying himself. But for the timely interruption of Mademoiselle Emily he would have betrayed the grossest ignorance concerning the affairs of the family into which he had introduced himself as a relative. What a warning to be cautious! Indeed he formed the resolution rather to pass for taciturn and simple than by loquacity betray his secret.

These reflections were interrupted by approaching footsteps. A moment later the door opened and admitted a small man in rather deep negligee, in whose features Robert imagined to discover a resemblance to Emily. But, if the features were the same, the spirit animating them was not. It expressed mediocricy coupled witha good-nature which promised well for Robert's plans. Monsieur Pordu wore a night-gown, which fortunately reached to his feet and concealed the absence of garments generally considered indispensable. On his head he wore a night-cap whose long and pointed top fell down his neck and gave him a rather ludicrous appearance. Robert could not suppress a smile, and Emily, who followed on her father's heels, indulged in a noiseless laugh.

"Is it possible! is it possible!" the man in negligee exclaimed, running towards Robert and embracing him in the most affectionate manner. "My good Henry! my dear nephew! How do you do? How are the folks at home?"

"All well, Uncle Etienne; thank you for the inquiry."

"And so you have come to see us in our time of trouble! That is kind in you, that is kind indeed, my good boy! But how have you managed to slip through the German lines? They say they keep a sharp look-out, these *Prussiens*."

"So they do, uncle; but they're not a match for a child of Marseilles. I got through all right, and that is well; but I brought you a letter from Aunt Heloise in Corbeil, and that is better. Finally I fetched you a whole lot of provisions, and that is best of all, I think."

"You don't say so, Henri: a whole lot of provisions! And where are they, these provisions?"

"In the skiff that brought me down the Seine, well locked up in a box."

"But that is dangerous! that is risky!" exclaimed Uncle Etienne with undisguised alarm. "Paris was full of thieves at all times; but now it swarms with them. They'll carry off your provisions, so they will."

"No doubt they will, uncle, unless we manage to forestall them. We must go down to the river and fetch them up."

"So we must, nephew, so we must. Just let me go up stairs and make myself a little more presentable for the quay. Emily, get my hat and cane ready."

"But the letter, father: don't you want to read it first?"

"The letter? The deuce take the letter! How can I read letters, when the provisions, the valuable provisions are at jeopardy?"

"But you might give it to me, father. I could read it during your absence."

"So you might, child, so you might. 'Tisn't more than right that every member of the household should do its share of labor. Give her the letter, Henry, give her the letter; she can study it out while we are attending to more important matters."

Monsieur Pordu left the room in hot haste, and Robert, obedient to his dictates, handed the letter to the girl. She was too polite, however, to read it in his presence. Slipping it into her bosom, she nodded pleasantly and said:

"That will drive the time away, while you are absent. You won't be long tho', will you? I shall make a fire at once and have breakfast ready on your return. You must be hungry, are you not?"

"I cannot deny it and shall do justice to your viands, depend upon it. It don't require much of an appetite for that though. The very recollection that cousin Emily prepared the meal, will suffice to make me pitch in like a Turk."

She looked at him with a roguish look and shook her finger in a menacing manner.

"They talk about Parisian galantry," she said, "but it strikes

me that Marseilles cannot be far behind. I shall get real angry with you, Monsieur Henri, if you don't cease your flatteries."

"Give me your definition then of flattery. For I would sooner remain dumb, than excite your displeasure by a renewal of my offense."

He closed his lips, as if determined to be as good as his word The girl looked at him, as if her very soul had stepped into her eyes. Nor can we blame her much. Robert appeared in his fisherman's suit even to greater advantage than in his uniform. The white trowsers, the red shirt, the blue jacket, the oil-cloth-hat, the top boots: all this formed an ensemble which set off the fine form, the easy bearing, the handsome face, the wavy hair to the best advantage. He had slightly stained his face and hands; but this bronze-color, instead of injuring his appearance, was another feature of attraction. It is more than likely that Emily had seen as handsome fellows before; but she probably had never come in contact with one who combined with his physical attractions the charm of so well trained a mind. To be sure, Robert had had no opportunity of displaying his erudition before Emily, but even without such an exhibition, education and knowledge fasten an indelible and unmistakable stamp upon our being. It was probably to this subtle and indescribable charm that the young Parisienne opened her heart. Without knowing it, she was in danger of losing it at first sight. Nor was Robert, on the other hand, conscious of the danger of jeopardizing the tranquility of a pure gladsome maiden, where he had only calculated to injure the enemy.

At length, after viewing him in silence for a whole minute, she said:

"Flattery is a grain of truth mixed with a pound of exaggeration; a compound spread over words, as molasses over paper. While the latter serves to catch flies, the former is calculated to entrap weak maidens."

"Then it cannot be particularly dangerous to you; for weakness seems not to belong to your foibles."

"So I appear rather masculine, eh?"

"Oh! Cousin Emily, why are you so perverse in mis-interpreting my words?"

"Because I was so lucky as to cast a glance into the gentleman's cards."

"How so?" inquired Robert, rather startled.

"Oh! never mind!" replied Emily. "Here comes father, just in time to prevent a duel. Let us agree to an armistice and delay the renewal of hostilities to a more favorable opportunity. Well, papa, you are in full trim for the adventure, I see."

"Yes, child. We are ready to land these wonderful provisions. Nephew, shall we set out for the river?"

"Just as you say. But how are we going to take the box home? It is altogether too heavy to be carried."

"We might take our wheel-barrow."

"Even that would not answer the purpose. Is there no dray-man near whose services could be secured?"

"A dray-man? Why, yes: there is Antoine across the street, a neighbor and good friend in the bargain. I will just go and—"

"No, father, not Antoine," interrupted Emily rather more emphatically than the occasion seemed to warrant. "I wouldn't trouble Antoine."

"And why not, Emily?" asked Pordu, wonderingly.

"Because—because poor Antoine worked very hard all day yesterday."

"Well, he has had a good chance of resting during the night. So, if that is all—"

"But it isn't, father! His wagon—his horse—the harness—oh yes! now I think of it: his harness is at the saddler's. I saw him take it there last night."

"And *I* saw him take it back again. Come, come, Emily, don't bandy words for nothing. Light your fire; prepare the breakfast; set the table: these are the occupations of a dutiful daughter. Henry and I shall meanwhile busy ourselves with graver affairs. Come, nephew; let's be off."

Emily made no further attempt to change her father's purpose; but in going out, Robert thought he noticed in her face an expression of annoyance and displeasure which induced him to believe that her relations to the Antoine in question were not the most pleasant. He had no time, however, to follow up his thoughts; for Mr. Pordu had already left the house and now crossed the

street, summoning his companion to hurry. He stopped at a small house nearly opposite his own and knocked. It was now half past five and the inmates seemed to be up, for a few minutes later a young man appeared at the door, with light in hand, and inquired after their wishes.

"It is *I*, Antoine," said Pordu with the familiarity of the neighbor and the condescension of the patron. "I come to introduce to you my nephew, Henry Bouvois, and then to engage your wagon. There is a box at the river which I want brought up before the morning."

The man called Antoine did not reply at once, but eyed Robert with a curious glance. Our friend returned this glance and beheld a face which was not very prepossessing. He saw a low forehead over which masses of black hair hung nearly into his eyes. The latter were small and deepset, but black and piercing. Shaggy brows nearly met over an ill-shaped nose, while the lips were thick and sensual. The lower part of the face projected in a way to indicate the preponderance of strong animal propensities, and the coarse, red beard which covered cheeks and chin was by no means calculated to improve the impression. Robert's study of this face was terminated by the fellow's reply.

"A box, Monsieur Pordu! Where in the world did that come from?"

"By way of water, Antoine, by way of water. But you haven't told me yet whether I can have your wagon."

"By way of water?" continued Antoine without paying any attention to the inquiry. "How could it come by way of water?"

"Very easily, my good friend. My nephew smuggled it through the Prussian lines. But time presses, Antoine, and I want to know whether I can have your assistance."

"Through the Prussian lines!" exclaimed Antoine. "You don't say so! That is a most incredible story!"

"It is nevertheless trne, Antoine. But I want to know—"

"See here, Uncle Etienne," Robert now interrupted him. "This gentleman seems not inclined to humor you. Supposing we leave him to his astonishment and try to do without him?"

Antoine shot an ugly glance at the speaker, but the suggestion seemed to have exercised a salutory effect; for he said at once:

"Not humor neighbor Pordu! There you do me a grievous wrong. Only I was so much surprised that I wanted to know—"

"You shall know everything, provided you furnish us at once the means of taking the box to my uncle's house."

Robert's resolute tone had the desired effect. Antoine at once lit a lantern and went to the stable, followed by Pordu and Robert who assisted him in hitching the horse to a light spring-wagon. Robert was surprised to see the animal in such fair condition, and said as much to the owner. Antoine smiled.

"They're not all so lucky," he said with a grin. "Most of 'em have their hip-bones sticking out considerably. But I am a thinking fellow, you know. I always buy my hay and feed in season."

"You are fortunate indeed. So provisions are beginning to fail pretty generally in Paris?"

"I bet you they are. 'Tis the poor, though, that suffer first. The rich always manage to get a supply, though it's not so choice as usual, I warrant you. They begin to kill horses now, and I have a neighbor who makes it a business with his boys to catch fat cats and dogs. He said yesterday he thought of turning his attention to rat-catching shortly."

"That looks bad," said Robert. "We must hurry, then, to give these Prussians a good whaling, or Paris will have to yield sooner or later."

"That's even so. But Monsieur Pordu says you come from abroad: perhaps you have good news in store?"

"Well, of that anon. The horse is hitched, I see, and we may as well start for the river, if we want to save my box from falling into the wrong hands."

Antoine took the hint and begged his visitors to get in. Then he followed himself and started at once for the river, where Robert assumed the character of a guide, and pointed out the spot where his boat lay secured. The quay was completely deserted. The Parisians seemed to have lost their nocturnal habits: perhaps they considered sleep the best antidote against the evils of the hour. The box also was untouched. Ignorance of its existence had saved a treasure which, at that period, would have been sought more eagerly than gold or precious stones. The three men lifted it from the boat and placed it on the wagon, and, before the clock

of the next steeple sounded the seventh hour, it was safely stored away in Mr. Pordu's larder. Antoine was amply rewarded for his services; but, instead of withdrawing to his own habitation, which would have been very acceptable to Robert and also, as he imagined, to Emily, he remained and threw out strong hints that he would not only like to hear Henri Bouvois' story, but also see the treasures of the box. To the latter insinuation Emily objected on the plea that breakfast was ready, and would spoil if not attended to at once. She took good care not to invite Monsieur Antoine, who evidently was no favorite of hers; but her father repaired this omission by assuring the young man that he would put the whole family under obligations by sharing the meal. Antoine required no urging whatever; but, accepting the invitation, sat down and divided his attention amongst three things. First, he did due homage to Emily's dishes; secondly, he plied Robert with the most persevering questions, and thirdly, he pursued Emily with the most amorous glances imaginable. The poor girl appeared to be greatly annoyed by his attention which was too marked to be mistaken, but seemed to meet the approbation of the father as decidedly as it created the displeasure of the daughter. Robert felt pity on the girl and endeavored to neutralise Monsieur Antoine's heart by stuffing his curiosity. He told him the most marvelous yarns which were swallowed by the teamster as well as by Mr. Pordu with the greatest satisfaction, while they called an incredulous smile to the lips of Emily. The girl did not contradict him, however. On the contrary, she seemed to divine his motive, and expressed her gratitude so clearly in look, word and action, that even obtuse Mr. Antoine could not help noticing it. However to notice and resent is the same thing for men of his calibre. He ceased asking questions; he even stopped eating and watched every word and glance of the girl and her new cousin with an eagerness that struck Robert as strange, and could not have escaped Emily but for the new element which seemed to have gained a control over her mind as potent as it was recent. As it was, she only noticed Robert, taking pleasure, perhaps, in benefiting by the opportunity of distinguishing a favorite at the expense of a person whose addresses seemed very distasteful to her.

The meal passed and Antoine left without another attempt at penetrating the secret of the mysterious box. Curiosity had successfully battled with love; but jealousy is stronger than love, and before it all other feelings had to stand back. Little did Robert dream what a powerful and vigilant foe the good-will of Emily had secured him in the person of Monsieur Antoine. True, he knew that the fellow did not like him; but he had often met with persons who had displayed a like antipathy, without allowing it to assume the form of actual enmity.

When Antoine retired, Monsieur Pordu insisted on an immediate examination of the box, a measure which was resolved upon, as no one raised an objection. The worthy man was delighted at the sight of the many luxuries with which the affection of an imaginary sister had provided him, and was untiring in her praise. He also read the letter which Robert had delivered, and shed tears at the announcement that his nephew had slipped through the German lines in order to place his strong right hand at the disposal of the country.

"That is noble! that is grand! that is heroic, Henry," he cried. "But my fellow-citizens will not fail to appreciate such magnanimity. Come, Henry, take your hat and let us go at once to the next mairie, in order to enroll your name."

"No, uncle, thank you, not just now. Let me wait a single day to get better acquainted with you and Emily. The country won't go to ruin on that account, I hope?"

"I hope not, Henry, I hope not. I only thonght—"

"Why, father, it is quite natural for Henry to wish to feel a little at home, before he joins the guards. Just you leave him alone and I warrant you, he'll make his appearance in due season."

"That's so, Emily, that's so. Still, Harry, I suppose you have no objection if I brag a little about my patriotic nephew."

"Indeed I do, uncle, decidedly. If you tell them a single word, they'll bother me from morning until night, and then, of course, good-bye to all retirement. Wait till to-morrow and I'll give you carte-blanche to act just as you please."

"Agreed, Henry, agreed. But if you refuse to accompany me, you must at least excuse my absence for a few hours. My fellow-citizens have thought proper to entrust me with an important

office in this period of trial, an office which would suffer through my absence. So, if you'll excuse me—"

"No excuse is necessary, uncle. 'Duty before pleasure' at all times, of course."

"Hear that, Emily! 'Duty before pleasure!' Just what I always tell you. Nephew give her a good lecture on that subject. She makes an attempt at rebellion every once in a while, and a good talking can do her no harm. Ha! ha! ha! Good-bye, children; good-bye!"

Out he went and Emily looked after him with a smile.

"Do you know what office he fills?" she inquired roguishly.

"No, cousin; what is it?"

"He belongs to a committee whose duty is to catch Prussian spies. Just think of Monsieur mon pere as a spy-catcher! It is too ridiculous to repress a smile!"

At this she did not only smile but burst into a merry laugh. This was well for Robert's incognito, for her sudden announcement had startled him to such a degree that his mien might have betrayed him, if her merriment had not given him time to regain his composure. He joined in her laugh; but it was a very forced effort, and he was glad when her ceasing it allowed him to discontinue it himself. She changed the subject by asking abruptly:

"What do you think of Antoine? Is he not a disagreeable fellow?"

"That's what they call a leading question; requiring a "*no*" for an answer."

"No indeed. I gave *my* opinion; but at the same time desire your impartial judgment."

"But I *am* not impartial."

"Why not, cousin?"

"Do you think I am blind? Didn't I see the amorous glances with which he threatened to devour you?"

Emily colored.

"It is no use to catechise you," she said. "I give it up in despair."

"Nay, nay, fair cousin. There is no occasion for that. I must confess that Monsieur Antoine did not impress me very favor-

ably from the beginning. Your father, however, seems to think well of him."

"So he does, and more's the pity. He allows him to pester me with his disagreeable visits, and, what is worse, he backs him in still greater pretensions."

"Is it possible? Now I understand the furious glances he cast at me during breakfast. He eyed me as if he wanted to devour me."

"Did he? I paid no attention to him. So much the better that he cannot harm you."

"You think he would if he got a chance?"

"I *know* it. I have seen enough of Antoine to be convinced that he is an implacable enemy."

"Then he would be likely to betray me, would he not?"

"Betray you? How? to whom? I do not understand you."

Robert was slightly embarrassed.

"Betray is not the proper word, Emily. I mean, would he disclose my presence here to others?"

"Most likely, Henry; but what does that matter? You don't expect your presence to remain a secret?"

"No, no, Emily. Only I don't like to be in everybody's mouth. Moreover, I want to spend a quiet day or two before showing my face to the people."

"Oh! now I understand! I can hardly say what he will do. If he knew that he could spite you by telling everbody he would probably do so."

"Well, never mind. Monsieur Antoine is hardly important enough to trouble ourselves about him. Let us talk of something else."

And so they did, spending a very pleasant morning; *she* listening with increasing suspense to every word he uttered; *he* yielding also, in a measure, to the influence of her genial nature, but being free from that magnetic power, called love, to which she had fallen a prey.

CHAPTER XXI.

ANTOINE BREUX was a young peasant from the neighborhood of Landres, who had moved to Paris in obedience to the summons of an elder brother. This brother, Maurice Breux, had, for years, followed the same business, and, through economy and perseverance, accumulated a competence. Desiring to retire from bnsiness, he had written to his brother and offered him such favorable terms that Antoine had been unable to resist the temptation, and consequently settled in Paris. Maurice owned the house in which he lived, and possessed sufficient rentes to live independently and even comfortably. The house contained more space than he needed, and so he rented a portion, the "belle etage," and thereby considerably swelled his income.

At present, however, he was sorely tried. His means sufficed for ordinary times; but the siege had swelled the price of all provisions to an incredible height, and thereby compelled the family to economize and deny themselves the first necessaries of life. To make matters worse, the rooms of the second story were occupied without being rented; that is, they were occupied by a young lady who, though rich, was, just then, unable to secure the means of subsistence. She was a friend of the family, the landlord's sister having, for many years, served her as chamber-maid; but, although Maurice Breux and his wife were delighted at keeping under their roof so desirable a guest, they could not disguise from themselves the fact that the presence of three consumers (the young lady was attended by two servants) was calculated to increase their embarrassment. It was at this crisis that Antoine was summoned to assist in storing the box with provisions. We know that he left the house of Mr. Pordu in ill humor, and, as the distance across the street was but trifling, we may imagine that the mood in which he reached his home was hardly an improvement on that in which he had departed. He threw himself into a chair and stared through the window, until a conversation between his brother and sister-in-law attracted his attention. They complained about their increasing

inability to meet their daily wants, and wondered how this would end and to what extremes it would be carried. Antoine will hardly have struck the reader as a very good or amiable man; but we must give him all the credit he deserves, and so relate that, as a redeeming quality, he entertained a high regard for his brother. No sooner had he heard the troubles of the worthy pair, when he arose and handed them the money he had received for his early trip.

"Thank you, brother, you mean kindly," said Maurice looking up and saluting Antoine with a nod. "I accept this, since I need it; but, kind though the motive, the money is no more to our wants than the drop of water on the red-hot plate—it is consumed in an instant. What we want is cheaper victuals or a cessation of this dreadful war."

Just then a new thought struck Antoine's mind. He had, a moment ago, obeyed a good impulse; but, as that sort was scarce within him, the next thought turning up was rather likely to spring from an evil impulse. He loved his brother; he hated (at that moment, at least,) Pordu and his daughter. His brother was poor, almost unable to secure the most indispensable necessaries —the people across the street were rich; rich, at least, in provisions, just then the most desirable kind of opulence. Now, should the folks across the way roll in abundance, while the family of his brother suffered from want? His narrow mind could not fathom the justice of such a condition, and he hastened to inform his brother that Pordu had just received a box with provisions, large enough for him and all the neighbors, if he would only consent to share his treasures with them.

"A box with provisions!" Maurice exclaimed. "Brother Antoine, you must have dreamed!"

"Indeed I haven't. They wakened me early and I helped them to get the box to the house. You can see for yourself if you don't believe me."

"Indeed, I don't doubt your word. But where did the box come from?"

Antoine told all he knew. When he had done, he added:

"And now I think he ought to share with us. If I went to the

market and told the hungry people there, they'd storm the house and take everything."

"You must not think of that, Antoine; much less speak of it."

"Well, then he ought to share. Why should he have more than enough and you suffer want."

"That is not our business, Antoine. Whatever his conscience might urge as his duty, he surely has a right to keep what his sister sent him."

"But Mr. Pordu is not so hard-hearted as that," suggested Mrs. Breux. "Nobody has asked him yet, and so he could not well have given."

"That's true," said her husband; "nobody has asked him yet."

"Then why not ask him?" suggested Antoine.

"Yes, why not ask him?" echoed Mrs Breux.

"Ask whom?" inquired a voice from the back-part of the room. The others turned and Mrs. Breux exclaimed:

"Ah! 'tis brother Jean. Come, brother, and give us your advice in this important matter."

The case was explained to him.

"Well," he said with a shrug of his shoulders. "I see no difficulty about this. If I knew Monsieur Pordu as well as brother Maurice does, I wouldn't hesitate to ask him a small favor."

"He won't consider it a small one, Jean, I wnrrant you. Besides, I always hate to presume on the ground of friendship."

"I have no such scruples, brother Maurice. Indeed, if it is any benefit to you, I will go to Mr. Pordu and ask him, stranger though I am."

"Oh! I guess not. Indeed, I think we have no right to trouble our neighbor at all. 'Do unto others as you wish them to do unto you' is the golden rule, you know."

"That's well enough in time of peace," said Mrs. Breux.

"Yes, and, as Jean helps to consume, I think it isn't more than fair that he should assist in providing," suggested Antoine. "He fetched three mouths, you know, and it is his duty to aid in filling them."

Jean colored, but he admitted the justice of the rude remark and again volunteered to appeal to the neighbor's generosity.

Maurice was still reluctant, but, when the others all advocated the measure, he yielded by withdrawing his objections.

"If it is to be—well let it be!" he said. "But as to Jean's going, it cannot be thought of. Not that I would object to his company, (for that isn't the case;) but if Etienne is to be asked, it comes with a better grace from a friend and neighbor, than from a comparative stranger. Come, Jean; get your hat and let's go over."

Jean obeyed and the two walked across the street. Maurice knocked and seemed relieved when Emily opened the door.

"Is your father in, child?" he inquired in a rather uncertain tone and manner.

"No, Sir, he went out on business. Won't you come in and wait a while? He can't be long now."

"No, no!" replied Maurice eagerly. "It doesn't matter, Mademoiselle. We can call some other time."

"I beg leave to differ," Jean now chimed in. "If the young lady will allow us to step in, we may as well do it and await his coming."

"I am sure you're very welcome," replied the girl and opened the door. "Step in, Messieurs, and be seated. This is my cousin, Henri Bouvois, Henri, this is Monsieur Breux and—why! what is the matter, Sir?"

These last words were addressed to Jean, who indeed acted strangely enough to warrant the question. He stared at Robert as if he had seen a ghost, and actually stepped back in dismay when the young man advanced to offer his hand. Emily's question in a measure reassured him. He endeavored to stifle his emotion and stammered:

"Nothing, Mademoiselle, nothing at all. I thought at first—that is I meant—indeed I am happy to make the gentleman's acquaintance."

His queer manner had attracted the attention of both Emily and Maurice. Else they might have noticed that the pretended cousin was slightly infected with the agitation. When their eyes returned to him, he was as calm as before. He bowed politely and assured Jean that he reciprocated his sentiments. The company then sat down; but the conversation somehow refused to

flow smoothly and naturally. Robert was the most talkative of the four, and treated the others to copious communications concerning his southern home; but when he turned to Jean and saw him sitting with his mouth open, staring at him with the most unmitigated astonishment, he stopped in the greatest flow of language, and had to hunt words to resume his description.

Emily was simply amused. She lacked the key to Jean's strange conduct, and interpreted his queer gestures as the result of rural diffidence. Maurice did not so much notice as feel the embarrassment. Jean's previous assurance had backed his rather feeble resolution, and now, when the sudden change in that worthy's behaviour deprived him of a powerful ally, he felt the desire of a retreat revive with double vigor. Drawing his watch and pretending great surprise at the lateness of the hour, he said:

"Why, Jean, we must go! I hadn't an idea it was that late. Emily, we shall trouble you some other time. Good-bye, Monsieur; good-bye, child. Tell your father that we shall call on him at an early hour."

With these words he rose and left the room, followed by Jean who made no attempt whatever to prolong the visit. He said nothing while they crossed the street. and remained even silent during the report which Maurice gave to the others concerning the result of the visit. After a while when Maurice turned to appeal to his companion for a confirmation of his report, Jean had vanished. Let us follow him up stairs, where he enters a room with nearly the same symptoms of excitement and bewilderment which he had betrayed in Pordu's house. The room contained two inmates, young ladies who were engaged in plying the needle with commendable zeal. When they saw Jean laboring under this strange excitement, one of them inquired as Emily had done:

"Why, Jean: what is the matter? Have you seen a ghost?"

"No, Madam, but something nearly as bad."

"That must have been something dreadful indeed!"

"It was, Madam, and yet it wasn't either."

"You speak in riddles, Jean."

"He has lost his wits!" cried the second girl.

"Well, Jeannette, you wouldn't have fared much better, I assure

you. Indeed you had better look out, or you may lose yours from merely hearing me tell."

"I'm not so sure of that, Jean,"

"But I am, Jeannette."

"Then let us hear. What *did* you see, Sir?"

Jean walked up to the girls, and said in low accents and with an air of importance:

"Listen then. I saw—the Prussian officer that came near being shot at Sedan!"

Jeannette turned out proof against the dangerous denouement; but on her mistress the announcement produced a strange effect. The blood rushed into her face and then as suddenly receded, leaving a deadly pallor on her cheeks. She clasped her hands and half rose from her chair, to fall back upon it in consequence of a sudden weakness.

"Jean!" she cried. Then, checking herself, she continued:

"But this is nonsense! Nonsense in you to report such a foolish story; nonsense in me to give it credit. How should Le Brun have come to Paris?"

"That I cannot tell. What I *know* is that I have seen him."

"Perhaps you saw somebody with a strong resemblance?"

"No, no, Mademoiselle; I saw him in person."

"And did he acknowledge his identity?"

"No, Madam; he pretends to come from Marseilles, and to be a nephew of Mr. Pordu."

"Who is Pordu?"

"A person living across the street."

"So near?" exclaimed the young lady whose unbelief had been shaken by Jean's assurance. "I shall have no rest until I know whether you are right or wrong. But how shall I find out? Does this Mr. Pordu follow any trade?"

"He held a little office under the emperor. *Now* he is merely employed in catching Prussian spies."

"And Le Brun should venture in his house? Impossible!"

"He is not in uniform, of course," said Jean, scornfully. "He is disguised."

"As what?"

"As a fisherman. He calls himself Bouvois and pretends to

have slipped through the German lines with a big box of provisions. A likely story! The Germans are apt to let chaps with provisions through their lines!"

"Oh, Jean! I wish you had not to'd me. I shall be miserable as long as this doubt lasts. And when it ends, and I know that your supposition is correct, I shall be more miserable than before."

"Then I wouldn't endeavor to find out," said Jeannette, mischievously.

Her mistress made a gesture of impatience.

"I want no wit now, Jeannette; I want advice."

"Oh, advice? Well, let me think. If I were you, I would follow this up. It looks like an adventure, and I like adventures."

"Yes, especially when Turcos are mixed up in them," retorted her mistress mockingly.

"Oh, that is a different thing. I must confess I was frightened then. Still, if I had known the happy termination of that adventure, I should have liked it too."

"But you didn't, nor do we know how this will terminate. You say you would follow it up: that is more easily said than done."

"Not at all, Mademoiselle. All you have to do is to go over and see for yourself."

"I go over?" she asked in amazement.

"Yes, why not? Can't you say you are from Marseilles and are anxious to inquire after your friends?"

"No, no, Jeannette. That would never do. I should betray myself the first moment."

"Then let me go and reconnoitre."

"I wouldn't believe anybody's eyes but my own."

"Then let me go and request his presence here. My mistress, a lady from Marseilles, requests his presence across the street to receive news of her friends at home. Yes, that will answer. Jean, hand me the bonnet. I shall be back in a moment."

She had jumped up meanwhile and was on the point of leaving the room, when the voice of her mistress stopped her.

"Jeannette! what are you doing? How can you commit me so! You forget how he repelled my advances in Sedan?"

"No, Mademoiselle; I recollect it very well, and it is for this

very reason that I want him to come here and do penitence. If he refuses we shall send Jean to the next vigilance-committee, and have him arrested."

"Don't jest that way, Jeannette," exhorted the lady. "Are you not aware that such a measure would result in certain death?"

"And does he not deserve death for insulting Mademoiselle? To say nothing of his attempt against the city."

"So you think he plots against the city?"

"Of course. For what other purpose can he have come?"

"To see Mademoiselle," suggested Jean.

A ray of joy flew over her face.

"Do you really think so?" she inquired, eagerly.

"It is possible."

"But very improbable."

"Well, the only way to know is to try. If you will let me go you shall know very soon."

"But Jeannette—" her mistress protested. Before, however, the protest reached her ears, she had slipped out of the room. The other two hastened to the window and saw her cross the street. Now she reaches the door; she knocks; she enters: the step is taken, the die has been cast, and with fear and trembling the young lady awaits the consequences.

Let us follow Jeannette; let us even anticipate her arrival and visit the room before she enters. We find friend Robert in a pensive mood. The meeting with Jean had undoubtedly startled him, and he ponders upon the course which he had better pursue. Did Jean recognize him? His bewilderment leaves little doubt of that. Will he, in such a case, betray him? It is hard to say; but the malignant persecution on the part of his master makes it more than probable. In such a case rapid flight is the only salvation. But *is* it salvation? Such a flight is the gratuitous proclamation of his presence, and can he really escape the pursuit of a million people, whose eyes are sharpened, whose feet quickened, whose hands strengthened by hatred and jealousy? His face, his form, his clothes will be minutely described, and, without a friend to conceal him, it will be next to impossible to escape.

These considerations cause him to hesitate; but they make him

taciturn, and he gives but feeble responses to Emily's spirited remarks. For a while she enjoys her easy victories; but finally his absence of mind attracts her attention. She plies him with questions which seriously endanger his incognito. All at once they hear a knock at the door which causes Emily to obey the summons. Robert feels relieved; but suddenly he recollects that this summons may possibly announce the officers of the law who come to effect an arrest. This thought works upon his feelings. His brows lower; his lips contract; his hand seeks the hidden revolver in his breast-pocket. Rising to his feet he awaits the arrival of the visitors, firmly resolved to die rather than surrender to the mercy of an infuriated crowd. But, instead of the police, two girls make their appearance, one of them his hostess, the other a woman whose face is familiar, but whom he cannot place just then. This sight produces a reaction in Robert; but, as the machinery of the mind acts quicker than that of the body, a shadow on his brow remains sufficiently long to be noticed by Emily.

"What now, Sir Cousin?" she exclaimed, jokingly. "Has all your thoughtfulness turned into vinegar during my absence? First serious enough for a judge—now ferocious enough for a savage. What causes you to frown that way?"

"Nothing particular, fair cousin," he replied, with an attempt to enter into her spirit. "If I frowned, it was perchance at the frequent interruptions which threaten to deprive me of your company."

"But supposing they originate with a lady? Henri, Henri! if you knew of what a sweet message this girl is the bearer, you would surely smile instead of frowning."

"Of that we can easily convince ourselves if she will have the kindness to divulge her news."

These words were partly lost on Jeannette who waited for a favorable opportunity of putting in her say. Yet she guessed the nature of his summons, and was not slow to benefit by the occasion. So she began:

"Mr.—I forget now what my mistress called you."

"I don't know what she called me; but my name is Henri Bouvois."

"Exactly, that's what she *did* call you. Well, Mr. Henri Bouvois, when my lady heard of your being in the city, she told me to call and ask you about her friends. She said: 'Jeannette,' says she, 'just you go over to Mr. Le B—' "

"Bouvois," corrected Robert.

"Exactly, Bouvois. 'Go over to Mr. Bouvois,' says she, 'and inquire about all my old friends at Sed—' "

"Marseilles," corrected Robert.

"Exactly, Marseilles. She has lots of relatives there, you know, and is anxious to hear about them."

"But," replied Robert, hesitatingly, "I may not know her friends. Did she tell you the names?"

"Indeed, and she did not. 'Jeannette,' said she, 'go across the street to Monsieur Pordu, and tell Monsieur Le B—Henri Bouvois, I meant to say,—that I shall be happy to see him at my lodgings.' "

"At her lodgings!" repeated Robert, with such evident alarm that Emily could not help laughing.

"And why not?" she inquired, gayly. "She surely will not eat you. Cousin! cousin! I marvel at your manners! It is high time to have them mended according to the latest Parisian style. Here is your hat, Sir, and now follow this girl and let me hear a good account of you. Attention! right face! march! You see, Henri, I have caught the prevailing martial spirit."

Robert was annoyed and relieved at the same time; the former, because his mind was ill-prepared to respond to her gayety; the latter, because he was thus enabled to hide his embarrassment from her searching eyes. Finding resistance both useless and dangerous, he obeyed her injunctions and followed the messenger who led him across the street into the very house which he had visited in the morning.

"Up stairs, Monsieur," said the girl after reaching the hall, and he was on the point of obeying her injunctions, when a side door opened and showed the face of Antoine, who started back in surprise at the sight of the visitor. Robert felt a very disagreeable sensation; but as Jeannette evidently expected him to proceed, he had no time to ponder on the re-encounter and soon forgot it over the more startling developments that followed. After

ascending a flight of stairs and traversing a short passage, he reached a door which Jeannette opened, begging him to enter. So suddenly had all this occurred; so totally had events taken the lead forcing him from step to step, that he obeyed as if in a dream, and, crossing the threshold, stepped into the room. There was only one person in it, a woman. Mechanically Robert's eyes sought her face, but all his apathy vanished, when he encountered the glance of her who, more than once, had exercised so strange an influence over his destiny. Not that this meeting surprised him: the sight of the servants had in a measure prepared him for the aspect of the mistress. Still, this encounter roused his dormant energy as well as passion. He felt ashamed of having thus long suffered himself to be led by foreign influences, and resolved to shake off the strange infatuation to which he had fallen a prey. Straightening up and assuming a stern look, he exclaimed:

"Ah! It is you, Madam! My foreboding then has not deceived me."

The reader has long before this divined that nobody but Pauline Delmont was the inmate of that room. Handsome as she was, never before had she looked so charming as at that moment. A burning blush covered her cheeks. Joy, tenderness and diffidence struggled for the mastery on her beautiful countenance. Even the bearing of her body intimated this inward struggle. Her hands lay folded on her bosom; her head was slightly bowed, while the advanced position of one foot clearly betrayed the eagerness with which she had anticipated this meeting.

Robert was not entirely proof against so much loveliness; but while his eyes revelled in the sight, he seemed angry with himself for yielding to the charm. After uttering the above words, he folded his arms over his bosom and seemed to experience a malicious joy at her embarrassment.

"Ah, Monsieur!" she stammered at last. "What must you think of me! Thus to take the liberty—"

"Oh, Mademoiselle, do not apologise. You surely are indifferent to my opinion, and as to liberties: methinks your conduct at Nancy and Sedan ought to save you the trouble of making excuses."

Pauline started and looked at him half indignantly, half suppliantly.

"The same cruel doubt! The same harsh tone! What must I do, Sir, to convince you of my innocence?"

"Oh, nothing much. Prove that I am blind in spite of seeing; that black is white; that hatred is love, and falsehood truth—and I shall no longer doubt your innocence."

Pauline smiled bitterly.

"Merciful heavens! This is hard to bear!" she cried. "But it is condign punishment for the unnatural daughter of France who forgot her country to set up a foreign idol in the shrine of her heart."

Robert made a movement.

"You draw a tempting picture, Madam," he exclaimed; "but, like the fata morgana, it vanishes in thin air when you approach it."

"What makes you cling so tenaciously to this illusion?" she said, passionately. "You speak of Nancy: did I not kindly receive you in my house, and even apologise for a previous offense."

"And did you not also receive the assassin whose bullet sought my life in the dead of night? Did not my friends track his footprints to the self-same house that gave me shelter?"

"Perhaps they did; but does that prove me his accomplice?"

"It has that tendency, Madam. Can you explain it any other way?"

"I can; but the explanation is so horrible that nothing but the intense desire of setting myself right in your opinion can induce me to speak. *The man, Sir, who fired at you, is my cousin.*"

Robert started back, but remained silent.

"Is it strange that he should turn his steps towards his father's house?" she continued.

"I see! I see!" gasped Robert. "But you escaped with him: why that?"

"He informed us of the deed without revealing its author. 'The Prussians would soon be there,' he said, 'to wreak their vengeance on the entire neighborhood.' So we departed to escape their fury."

"In his company?"

"In his company. Had we a choice?"

"Perhaps not. He took you to Sedan?"

"No, to Chalons. His father afterwards conducted us to Bazailles."

"Then you were no party to his renewed persecutions at Sedan?"

Tears started to her eyes.

"Still such a question, Robert?" she inquired with prayerful accents and folded hands. "Oh God! Is there no oath powerful enough to shake your cruel suspicion?"

He relented considerably.

"Pardon me, Pauline," he said more softly. "I did not mean it. You learned my critical condition rather late, I suppose?"

"An hour before the time appointed for your execution. May a merciful Providence preserve me from spending such another hour!"

He looked at her more tenderly with every passing moment.

"When I learned the news," she continued, "I felt like yielding to despair. But your life was at stake, and that thought gave me strength. The emperor was the only man to help, and to him I turned my hurried steps. Through the intercession of a noble stranger I gained Napoleon's ear. He heard my story and my prayer, and with trembling hand I received the paper which ordered the delay of your execution. The generous stranger did not forsake me then. At his side I hastened to your prison to find it empty. Supported by his arm I hurried to the rampart to gaze at length upon a spectacle which made me reel. Excuse me, Sir; the very thought of it suffices to paralyze my strength. I have—to take—a seat."

She staggered towards a chair; but would have sunk upon the floor, if Robert had not sprung forward to receive her trembling form into his arms. His anger had entirely disappeared. Another, and even more ardent, feeling had taken its place. The passion he had years ago conceived for this lovely being, now broke the bounds with which suspicion and indignation had so long restrained it, and leaped forward with all the intensity of the pent-up flame. He pressed her to his bosom and showered

kisses upon her lips, her cheeks, eyes and forehead with an impetuosity which she could not have resisted, if she had desired to do so. However, she did not seem to be much inclined to resistance, a circumstance which probably finds its explanation in her recent weakness.

"Don't, Robert, don't," was all she said. But when he refused to heed her words, she surrendered herself to her fate with a praise-worthy resignation. At last, when the first storm of his excitement had spent itself, he conducted her to a sofa and gently lowered her upon the cushioned seat. Then, sitting down beside her, he took her hands and gazed long and wistfully into her eyes. For five minutes both remained silent; then he broke the spell by saying:

"And is this real? Is it not a dream from which I am destined to awaken to the old cruel reality? Oh, Pauline, if you knew how much these tormenting doubts have embittered my existence!"

"Then why adhere to them with such tenacity?" she inquired, archly, the natural buoyancy of the Frenchwoman breaking through her late trouble like the sunbeam through the storm-cloud. "I was sorely grieved while you doubted, Robert; but now, since you believe, I feel greatly tempted to use a woman's prerogative and pout and scold you for your want of faith. How could you have the heart to think me guilty of such monstrous cruelty?"

Her tone was serious enough; but he attempted to escape the question by joking it away.

"If you avail yourself of woman's rights," he said, "I shall have recourse to manly strength, and quash your proceedings as soon as they begin to be inconvenient, which is the case just now."

After this he closed her mouth with a kiss and repeated the measure as often as she made the attempt of speaking. At last she cried for mercy, and then he stopped his pleasant pastime to renew it a minute afterwards with another pretence. Thus they played and laughed like the most veritable children, a circumstance for which the reader will not make *me* responsible, but the mischievous little god with the bow and arrow who is said to

commit such rogueries every day, at the expense of countless swains and maidens, whose reason is reputed to suffer serious detriment under such injurious treatment.

The minds of our young couple must certainly be affected; else how could they thus continue to coo and sport at the very brink of a precipice which may swallow them both before they know it? At length, however, reason makes an effort to resume its throne. Pauline is the first to awaken to reality. Starting up in the midst of his caresses, she cried:

"But, Robert, I forgot, You never told me how it happens that I see you thus in Paris?"

Robert was slightly confused.

"Why ask that question?" he said, evasively. "Is it not enough that we found each other?"

"It is, my Robert; but I cannot conceal from myself the danger of losing you again beyond recovery. Confess, there is a daring scheme connected with your visit in the city?"

"And, were it so? To you I am nothing but the passionate lover who would rather perish on the spot than lose again this blissful consciousness of your affection."

"And to my country you are the dangerous foe who spies her weakest spot and uses the fatal information to her destruction."

A cloud passed over his brow.

"And if it were so—would you betray me?"

She embraced him with a passionate vehemence.

"Robert slay me, but never use that word again. Have I not already suffered enough through your suspicion?"

"But look at Judith of old. *She* slew her lover and covered herself with immortal glory."

"Alas, Robert, why do you speak thus? Was it necessary to appeal to my slumbering conscience? Was it necessary to remind me that I commit high-treason with every kiss I give and take?"

"And if I *did* remind you; if I did awaken your slumbering conscience: could you be tempted to sacrifice me to your patriotism?"

"No, Robert, I could not. I may be wrong in saying it; but I have no country save your heart, no home save your bosom. All

recollections have been drowned in my love, and what I think, and breathe and feel, is Robert, Robert, Robert!"

The young man pressed her passionately to his heart. A few moments she rested happily; but the fear of danger at last chased her up again.

"Oh, Robert!" she cried. "Let your errand be what it will: you must not tarry in Paris. Your sojourn here is death. The walls around you bear tales and the air communicates your secret thoughts. Hundreds of agents watch for German spies, and if they capture you no power on earth can save you. There will be no trial, no respite: a furious mob will pounce upon you and tear you into a thousand shreds! Oh, Robert! dearest Robert! listen to my first, my fervent prayer: flee from this city! Flee, before the fatal secret is betrayed. I have once suffered the agonies of death on your account: a second shock like that would upset my reason, and deliver me helplessly into the grasp of madness!"

She stared so wildly at these words that Robert became alarmed and tried to sooth her.

"I could not go in day-light, darling, could I?"

"If not in day-light, at least in the coming night. Robert, promise me that you will depart as soon as darkness has set in to hide your movements."

"And are you then so anxious to part from me?"

"Oh, Robert, that question is more than cruel. To stay is death; to flee is safety: could you deem me weak enough to jeopardize your safety for the gratification of a childish whim? I make a small sacrifice to secure a great boon: Robert will you promise me to depart the coming night?"

Who could resist such pleading? Surely not our friend. Duty, glory, fame: everything yielded before the passionate appeal of the beloved one, and, embracing her anew, he cried:

"I will, darling, I will. Your request is powerfully backed by the love of life. As long as I believed you hostile and deceitful, I plunged recklessly into the maddest schemes. Now, with the consciousness of your affection, I shall guard my life as the choicest treasure. To show you that I am in earnest, I shall leave

you at once; for the folks across the street might marvel at this protracted stay."

"Leave me at once?" she inquired, anxiously, clinging to him with a nervous grasp. "Is—that—necessary, Robert?"

He smiled.

"Practice is harder than theory," he said. "Just a minute ago you spoke of making sacrifices, and now—"

She laid her hand upon his mouth.

"I was a child," she said; "bnt childish you shall find me no longer. Farewell at once, if it need be; and may a kind Providence lead you safely from the city and preserve you through this whole cruel war, I must, I *shall* see you again; for God cannot possibly have shown me the promised land to shut its gate before me at the moment of fulfilment. Farewell, Robert; farewell, my own, my *only* one!"

She cast her arms around his neck and nestled her head against his bosom as if she meant never to relinquish him again. Robert too was deeply moved; but in this crisis he showed himself the strongest.

"Before I leave you, Pauline," he said, "we must lay plans to meet again. Who are the people living in this house, and why do you stay with them in preference to your relatives?"

"Can't you guess?" she inquired, raising her head. "*Your* enemy is *my* enemy, and it is to save myself from *his* hateful importunities that I left my friends to abide with strangers."

Robert's brows darkened.

"The scoundrel!" he muttered. "He is contracting a fearful debt; but the day of reckoning will come, depend upon it. And these people are kind to you?"

"Only too kind. We are three of us, and I fear we begin to be a burden to them. Provisions are beginning to be scarce and expensive at an alarming rate."

"Then, why remain in the city and undergo the hardships of this siege?"

"You mock me, Robert. How could I escape them? The Germans will not let me pass the lines."

"They will, if *I* am with you."

"*You*?" she exclaimed, starting up. "What do you mean, Robert? Pray, do not keep me in suspense."

"Can you not guess it, Pauline? What hinders you from joining in my flight to-night?"

A ray of delight lit up her countenance; but it went as quickly as it had come.

"That will never answer," she said, despondingly, with a shake of her head. "My presence would embarrass your movements and jeopardize your safety."

"Indeed it wouldn't. I have a little boat on the Seine: don't you think it would carry *two* as easily as one?"

"My sex would betray you."

"It wouldn't if you disguise yourself in male attire. I warrant you, that you would make the prettiest fisherman on all the rivers of France."

She blushed with pleasure at this praise; but continued to shake her head. At last, when all his arguments were exhausted, he formed a desperate resolution.

"Very well," he said. "If you are determined to remain, I shall remain as well."

"And your promise?" she said, greatly alarmed.

"Was given with a view of saving myself for you: but what does my salvation amount to, if you refuse to preserve yourself for me?"

"I shall be as safe here as elsewhere."

"You are mistaken. Our shells will, before long, make Paris a dangerous abode. Moreover, Famine will soon show her hideous face and raise the beastly passions of the people. Imagine if Dupre should discover your retreat under such circumstances."

This last consideration carried the point.

"I'll go with you," she said, rising hastily and looking around with a nervous glance, as if she expected to see the feared countenance even then. "Dispose of me as you please."

"Ah! that is my own Pauline!" he said, caressingly. "Can you procure a fisherman's suit before to-night?"

"I think I can. Garments are cheap enough, they say, and Jean surely knows where to get them."

"Caution him to be prudent, though. His intellect does not seem the brightest."

"He makes up in fidelity what he lacks in brightness. But give me my further instructions."

"Well, don the suit and hold yourself in readiness to meet me in the street at ten o'clock."

"As late as that?" she said with a shudder. "I tremble at the thought of knowing you so long in Paris."

"The streets will be too lively at an earlier hour."

"Oh no! the streets are desolate enough at dusk."

"Well, make it eight then. Be punctual, tho'; for a delay will imperil all."

"I shall do my best, Robert. And we shall take the boat then?"

"That is my purpose."

"But to row up stream will cause both noise and delay."

"I do not mean to row up stream," he said, playfully. "Has not the Seine a *down* as well as *up* course?"

"But going down stream we would have to pass the entire city."

"So we would."

"That is bold; that is desperate."

"Boldness is often an essential element for the success of a plan. Leave that to me, darling. I shall be cautious as well as bold: for, like Cæsar, I shall to-night carry with me my fortune. Now farewell, Pauline! I part with a lighter heart; for now I know that our separation will be only for a few hours. Bear up under the trial before you! Remember that Fortune favors the bold!"

A last kiss, a last pressure of the hand, and the door separated the lovers.

CHAPTER XXII.

In the passage Robert found Jeannette who seemed to have kept watch, and now gave him a knowing look. In the hall below he again met Monsieur Antoine, looking a little more bewildered and vexed at failing to comprehend the cause and nature of so long and strange a visit. Robert felt disgusted at the clumsiness of the fellow, and passed him with a glance in which his feelings were pretty plainly delineated. Antoine did not resent this glance; but he looked after the retiring visitor with an expression so ugly that it would certainly have alarmed Robert if he had noticed it. Our friend had indeed engaged the dray-man's thoughts during the entire visit. *What business had he up stairs*? that was the question which Antoine asked himself incessantly. Had he come to court Miss Delmont? then he had surely no business to pay his addresses to Emily Pordu at the same time. Now Antoine was interested in Emily, and he was indifferent to Pauline. When he showed so much eagerness in discovering a love-connection between our friend and Miss Delmont, he obeyed not so much the motives of jealousy as of egotism. "Emily has taken a fancy to this fellow," he argued to himself. "Now if I could convince her that he merely sports with her and offers to another the homage which she thinks herself entitled to, she must necessarily discard him and look with favor upon a worthier party. Antoine, sharpen your wits! Keep a good look out, and you may realize your wishes before you know it."

Acting on this principle, Antoine not only watched the hall during the entire interview; but even stealthily ascended the stairs to enlist his ear as an associate in his undertaking. In this he was foiled by the vigilance of Jeannette, who had no sooner heard the steps creak under his feet, when she went to the bannister and challenged him.

"Why! is that you, Antoine?" she said with a smile on her lips. "It is very kind in you to think of paying us a visit; but, as my mistress has company just now, you will oblige us by post-poning your call a little while."

"Exactly, Miss Jeannette," said Antoine, coloring with confusion and vexation. "Many thanks for the hint. But see here, Mademoiselle, could you not tell me who is with your mistress?"

"To be sure, Monsieur Antoine. It is a young fisherman by the name of Bouvois."

"And pray, what may be his business with the lady?"

"That is no secret, Antoine, and I may as well inform you. My mistress and this Bouvois hail from the same town, and so it is but natural that we should wish to hear from all our friends."

"Ah! that accounts for the length of the visit."

"Exactly, Monsieur Breux. Is there anything else with which I could serve you?"

"No, thank you, Mademoiselle. Is Jean at home?"

"He is not, Sir."

"Then farewell, Jeannette. I shall take pleasure in calling another time."

With this he retraced his steps. Jeannette indulged in a noiseless laugh.

"The fool!" she murmured. "To think he could outwit me! He will pump Jean now; but he is welcome to all he can get out of him!"

Jeannette based her calculations on Jean's virtues; Antoine his on Jean's vices—the sequel will show who was correct.

So Jean had vices? Antoine thought he had. A few days ago he and Jean had been at a social gathering in the neighborhood, where the death of all Germans had been drunk in plenty of good liquor. Jean had not shown himself equal to the occasion. After imbibing a certain quantity, he had become as loquacious as a magpie and poured his confidential communications into the ears of those who were willing to listen. Antoine could have pumped him then if he had desired to do so; but, voting him a bore, he had shunned him as much as possible. Now, however, circumstances had changed. The former annoyance had at present become a great desideratum, and Antoine set his wits at work to accomplish his purpose. We know already that the dray-man was not especially noted for brilliancy of intellect; but like most obtuse persons he possessed the low cunning which Providence seems to have vouchsafed to animals of an inferior

grade as a weapon of defense. Antoine perverted it to aggressive purposes. He retired to his chamber in a back-building and began to study. Jean was fond of liquor, and to provide for it, therefore, became the first requisite. But other considerations came into play as well. Antoine needed a place and occasion for the intended banquet. The place must be sufficiently retired to guard against the officious interference of Mademoiselle Jeannette, and the occasion natural enough to avoid the suspicion of Jean himself.

Antoine was a man of order. He took the question up in due succession. First the liquor. A smile of satisfaction stole over his face. He walked up to a large, wooden chest which stood in a corner of the room and opened it by means of a key which he drew from his pocket. After lifting the heavy cover, he drew forth a large, stone jug which he placed upon the table and viewed with an affectionate eye. He drew a chair to the table, sat down upon it and nodded to the jug as if it had been an old and dear acquaintance and capable of understanding him. Then he placed both elbows upon the table, rested his chin upon his hands and began to ponder. The jug seemed to inspire him, for before long he raised his head, brought down his fist vigorously upon the table and exclaimed:

"That will do!"

He rose from the chair and replaced the jug in the chest. Then he left the room, crossed a small court which separated the back-building from the front one, and with noiseless step walked to the kitchen-door. This he opened and peeped in. When he saw the room empty, he stepped in and, with the same noiselessnes, opened a cupboard in which his sister-in-law kept her plates and dishes. He took a coup!e of tumblers, put them in his pocket, re-shut the cupboard and left the kitchen as stealthily as he had entered it. In the hall Antoine nodded again. No person had seen him and another step towards the execution of his purpose had been successfully achieved. He carried his booty into his room, deposited it in the chest with the jug, and nodded a third time. Nodding seemed to have become a habit with the conspirator. He had nothing to show for the last nod; on the contrary he felt the difficulty of the remaining task and again set to work

without further delay. Pulling out his watch he discovered that noon was close at hand. It was too late now to operate before dinner. Moreover, man is more inclined to social intercourse after than before his meals. They make him physically and mentally indolent, and what could suit Jean better than to recline in an easy-chair and pass the time with that light gossip which is so convenient a precursor and mediator to an afternoon nap? Antoine was a philosopher in his way. He knew human nature. He could abide his time and abide it he did. Dinner soon gathered the members of the family around the table. Antoine's money had procured a sufficiency of plain but wholesome food, and a feeling of more than usual content seemed to rest on the company. Pauline was unusually silent, but the recent interview with her lover had left a happy impress on her countenance. The meal was rather short. Half-an-hour after its commencement the different parties had again retired to their rooms. Antoine lay in wait in his like the spider in its nest. He knew Jean's habits and waited patiently for the further development of events. Jean had an unusual amount of idle time on his hands, and it was no uncommon thing for him to drop into Antoine's room after dinner and chat or doze away the time. Perhaps he would do so to-day; if not, there would still be plenty of time for Antoine to interfere actively in the shaping of events.

The theory of an actual devil has exploded before the knowledge of an enlightened age; but although the most orthodox have been compelled to abandon reluctantly the idea of the embodiment of evil, it cannot be denied that there seems to be a subtle influence which favors iniquity and breeds evil with the most remarkable profusion. An evil thought is like the inception of a draught into which kindred matter is drawn on the principle of suction. Was Jean's conduct impelled by such a force? Antoine had not waited more than fifteen minutes, when behold! the face of the expected visitor appeared in the door. He pretended to start from a comfortable dose.

"Come in! come in!" he cried, pointing to an easy-chair. "You are a real God-send to a poor fellow who does not know how to spend a tedious afternoon."

Jean accepted the proffered chair.

"These are tedious times, and no mistake," he said. "Unless something turns up to divert our thoughts, we shall be compelled to join the Nationals from sheer ennui, Antoine."

"Perhaps we shall, Jean; but in the meantime we cannot afford to die of tediousncss: what will you give me for a bright idea?"

"Due praise, Antoine: that is all a fellow can afford in these hard times."

"And silence, Jean? A fellow can't afford to pass bright ideas like coppers."

"You want me to keep it to myself?"

"That's the idea."

"Mum is the word then."

"You are a good fellow, Jean; just the chap to suit my taste. That's the reason I selected you for my confident. Now watch and pay attention, Jean: *this is the 26th of October.*"

"Is that all the secret?" inquired Jean, looking sheepish. "If so, there's not much occasion for secrecy. I warrant that fact is pretty generally known."

"So it is no doubt; but another fact is not."

"And this fact?"

"Is my secret. What would you say, Jean, if I told you that the 26th of October is my birth-day?"

"I would congratulate you, Antoine."

"Thank you. And if I told you that I had procured a jug of genuine stuff and two tumblers for the occasion?"

"I should say: out with it to drink your health."

Instead of replying, Antoine rose and locked the door. Then he opened the chest and placed jug and tumblers upon the table. Jean had viewed the first measure with suspicion.

"What is that for?" he inquired, with the mien of a person deprived of his liberty.

Antoine pointed with his thumb across his shoulder.

"The old lady!" he whispered, mysteriously. "I should have liked to invite brother Maurice; but his better half would have objected. She is boss, you know, and death on liquor."

Jean saw the point. He knew that the ladies up stairs were not any more partial to liquor than the lady down stairs. So, instead of feeling the locking of the door as a measure of oppres-

sion, he began to consider it as a measure of protection. Besides, Antoine had meanwhile opened the jug and poured a brandy of beautiful color and tempting smell into the tumblers. He felt a growing appetite for the liquor, and when Antoine took his glass and pledged him for a toast, he eagerly followed the invitation and poured down the brandy with a relish that promised the best success for Antoine's plan. The two now sat down in good earnest; but, while the host merely *pretended* to imbibe freely, the guest poured down tumbler after tumbler, until the floodgates of his mind stood wide open, suffering his most secret thoughts to flow forth in torrents. Now Antoine thought it time to turn the conversation upon the desired point.

"That young fisherman," he said, "seems to be a lucky fellow. He finds ready favor with the ladies. Emily Pordu seems badly smitten with his charms, and, to judge from the long visit he paid up stairs this morning, your mistress is not averse to him either."

Jean had heard the word "fisherman," and, with the tenacity peculiar to intoxication, held on to the word at the expense of the rest of Antoine's remarks.

"Fisherman?" he exclaimed, with the heavy roll of the drunkard. "Fisherman indeed! What fisherman are you talking about?"

"Why, don't you reccollect Henri Bouvois, the fisherman, who paid a visit to Miss Delmont this morning?"

Jean smiled a superior smile.

"Fisherman indeed!" he drawled. "*Fisherman*! Lieutenant, you meant to say!"

Antoine was amazed. Had the brandy deranged his friend's mind? What did he mean with his "lieutenant?"

"I mean *fisherman*," he said, "and nothing else. What has Henri Bouvois to do with a lieutenant?"

"A great deal more than you imagine, ha! ha!"

"But how? I mean Henri Bouvois the fisherman from Marseilles."

"And I mean Robert Le Brun, the lieutenant, from Germany."

Gunboats on the Seine.

"Jean, don't talk nonsense! Didn't you see Henri Bouvois, the fisherman, who called on your mistress this morning."

"The deuce take your fisherman!" cried Jean, becoming irritated. "Don't I know better? Don't I know it is all a sham? Don't I know that Le Brun assumed that disguise to have access to my mistress, Miss Delmont? Don't contradict your betters, Antoine."

Antoine's amazement changed into bewilderment. Was this empty gossip, or did he really stand on the threshold of an important secret? It was surely worth while to humor Jean and follow up the trace.

"So you know this Bouvois of old?"

'I don't know any Bouvois at all."

"Well, well, this Le—, this Prussian, I mean."

"I think I do, Sir. I ought to, leastways, considering I saw him half-a-dozen times."

"But where, Jean?"

"At half-a-dozen places, Antoine. What does it matter to you where I saw him. Can't you take the word of a gentleman."

"I do, Jean, of course. I merely spoke at random. What you told me is so queer, so wonderful!"

"I reckon it *is* wonderful. 'Tis dangerous too to talk about it. Don't you say a word about it, or I shall break your neck. Wouldn't the officials feel tickled, though, if they knew it!"

Antoine thought so too. Moreover he formed at that very moment the resolution that they should have that gratification of their nerves. Of course, he took good care not to betray his intentions to his pot-companion, for he had no doubt that Jean would at once endeavor to make good his promise. Instead of that he continued to ply him with questions, until he could no longer doubt that his revelations rested upon something more substantial than the mere imagination of a fuddled brain.

When he knew enough, he proposed a nap on the bed, an idea which Jean at once embraced with apparent relish. Antoine assisted him in changing his position, and no sooner had he dropped on the bed, when a deep breathing and subsequent snore betrayed his immediate transit into the realm of dreams.

Antoine, on the other hand, dropped into a chair at the bed-

side to reflect on his discoveries and to form a resolution. His attempt, however, proved more difficult than he had probably anticipated. In order to get Jean drunk, he had been obliged to imbibe freely himself, and although he had escaped the beastly condition of his companion, he was sufficiently under the influence of the ardent beverage to form his determination independently of the innate caution of his character. The same liquor which had made Jean communicative, now prompted Antoine to divulge his secret. He had originally plotted to injure Bouvois, the fisherman, in the eyes of Emily. Now, when the ardent spirit had developed and nurtured the native malice of his heart, he lost sight of his original intention and felt an irresistible desire to denounce him to the authorities as a Prussian spy Perhaps he persuaded himself that patriotic motives lay at the bottom of this desire; but, let this be as it may, he certainly started from the room with the firm determination of having the pseudo-fisherman arrested without delay. He relocked the door from without and put the key in his pocket. After a cautious look into the hall, which happened to be empty, he ventured the passage and soon found himself in the street, complete master of the situation.

But where go? The city-hall was far away, nor was Antoine able to divest himself sufficiently of his rural diffidence to venture on so bold and direct a course. He hesitated a minute or two, until at last he remembered to have heard that Flourens, a man of great influence and public favor, dwelled in the same street. He had even been shown the house of this agitator, and, as his dizzy brain could think of no other and simpler expedient, he resolved to call on Flourens and inform him of his important discovery.

The distance to the house of the modern tribune was but short. After a walk of five minutes Antoine found himself standing at the entrance of a plain building, which lacked every indication of being tenanted by a man of renown or importance. Numerous visitors went out and in, though, and, following the latter class, the dray-man soon found himself in the presence of the man he sought. Flourens was engaged in conversation with two or three men, and so much engrossed did he seem in this occu-

pation, that Antoine hesitated to interrupt him. Indeed, the rapid walk had in a measure dispelled the fumes which had oppressed his brain, and he was seriously contemplating the propriety of beating a retreat, when the group of speakers broke up. All arose from their seats, the majority withdrawing from the room, while only two remained, exchanging a few words, as if they discussed a point or two of minor import. The eyes of one of them accidentally lit upon Antoine, whose expectant posture spoke too plainly his desire of being heard to be mistaken. The man came forward and said, politely:

"Fellow-citizen, you want to see me: what can I do for you?"

The reader will recollect that the fall of the empire had revived that mock-equality and fraternity which flourished in 1792, and had as distinguishing features the imitation of Roman manners and—the *guillotine*.

Antoine was abashed in spite of this politeness. He would now have gladly withdrawn from the presence of the agitator and merely stammered a few incoherent words.

"Monsieur would excuse—he had intended—but it was of no consequence—so with the gentleman's permission—he would take the liberty—"

These incoherent remarks could not ruffle the urbanity of Flourens. He had evidently learned that even the red republican cannot afford to dispense with politeness.

"Everything coming from a fellow-citizen is of importance to me. I am at leisure now, and if you will state the nature of your errand—"

Antoine had by this time become really frightened. He no longer thought of denouncing Le Brun: he merely studied to make an excuse in order to escape as soon as possible from this fearful presence. In his embarrassment he thought of using Pauline's name as a pretext for his mission; so he said:

"I think I entered the wrong house. My mistress, Miss Delmont, has sent me on an errand, and—"

He had no time to proceed. The second person present had no sooner heard the name of Miss Delmont than he became attentive. He stepped rapidly towards Antoine and said with eager accents:

"Miss Delmont, did you say? Where is she? What is the matter with her? You say she sent you?"

These words were uttered with an imperiousness and a vehemence that completed the confusion of poor Antoine. He stammered in so incoherent a manner and trembled withal so visibly that Flourens saw proper to interfere.

"Sit down, my friend," he said, soothingly. "My colleague seems to take interest in the name you mentioned: what is it with Miss Delmont?"

"Yes, yes! What is it with her? Speak quickly, my friend, speak quickly," interposed the other.

But Antoine was nearly past catechizing. Flourens noticed it and said:

"Patience, Dupre. In that way you will never succeed. Come, my good friend, what is your name?"

"Antoine Breux," replied the visitor, somewhat reassured.

"Where do you live?"

"No. 124, St. Paul Street."

"That is *this* street. And your mistress, Miss Delmont, does she live in the same house?"

The eyes of the person whom Flourens called Dupre watched the lips of Antoine with the most intense suspense. When he heard a "yes" in reply, a savage joy lit up his face.

"Do you know her christian name?" he inquired.

"Pauline."

"It is she!" exclaimed Dupre. "Flourens, you must excuse me. This news! I would not sell it for a million. Continue examining this man, while I—"

Flourens pressed his friend back upon his chair.

"Always this haste!" he scolded. "Can you never learn that patience and self-control are the statesman's fundamental virtues? Listen to this man's overtures. You will have plenty time to secure your inamorata. Now, fellow-citizen, proceed. You say you are in the service of this lady?"

Antoine's spirit was broken. A child could have conducted his examination.

"No, Sir," he replied; "not exactly in her service."

But she sent you here?"

"No, she did not."

"But she is in someway or other connected with your errand?"

"In a measure, yes."

"Would you tell us something about her?"

"Not about her, but—"

"Well, if not about *her*: about whom then?"

"About a man who came to see her this morning."

"And what would you tell us about him?"

Antoine hesitated. Flourens saw that he must make the questions more pointed.

"Can you tell us his name?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Well, what is it?"

"Robert Le Brun."

"Robert Le Brun?"

This exclamation was a double one. Flourens and Dupre had uttered the name at the same time; both with surprise, and the latter with an admixture of savage delight. He was no longer sorry for having waited. Flourens checked himself first.

"This Le Brun is no Frenchman, is he?"

"No, Sir; he is a German."

"Does he stay in the same house?"

"No, right across, with Mr. Pordu."

"For whom does he pass himself?"

"For Henri Bouvois, a fisherman."

"What do you think he is?"

"A Prussian officer."

"I know he is!" exclaimed Dupre. "But worse than that, he is a spy, and spies are shot. Flourens, let me go now."

"Not yet, Dupre. Let me first attend to this fellow."

The tone in which he said this was by no means complimentary. Antoine even imagined to discover in it the trace of a menace.

"Attend to me?" he cried. "You will not harm me? What have I done?"

"No, no, Sir; rest easy. I have no intention whatever of harming you. Only you must remain here until we have secured this Prussian spy."

"And how long will that be?"

"An hour at most. Have no fear whatever, Monsieur Breux: we are not in the habit of harming the benefactors of the commonwealth. Step into this room, Sir, and you, George, take care of him and allow no access to him whatever. I make you responsible for his safety."

These words were addressed to a young man who sat at the table and seemed to act in the capacity of a secretary. He caught a significant glance from his master's eye, and replied:

"Aye, aye, Sir; I'll see to it. Nobody shall touch a hair of his head. This way, Monsieur, if you please. I'll give you the very best quarters the house can afford."

He left in Antoine's company, and Flourens and Dupre were alone.

"And now—what next?" the former inquired of his companion.

"That's what I should like to learn from you. What shall we do with him?"

"Of course arrest him."

"In due form of law? Wonldn't it be shorter to raise a mob and have him lynched?"

He said that so coolly that Flourens could not help shuddering.

"No, no, not that!" he said. "Leave his arrest to me. You are more deeply interested in the damsel, are you not?"

"That's hard to tell. I love the one as intensely as I hate the other."

"Then secure the girl by all means. I'll take care of Le Brun."

"Well, let it be so. When do you intend to make the arrest?"

"At once, of course. The absence of this fellow might else create suspicion. I'll take a dozen men to provide for emergencies."

"The more the better: you'll find this Le Brun a desperate character. I for my part shall secure a carriage for my cousin, to avoid publicity."

"Your cousin? That looks like a little romance."

"Perhaps it is one. But let us act in concert. We must arrive at the same time, or one of the birds might make his escape."

"All right, Sir. Engage one carriage for yourself and another for me. In the meantime, I'll secure my dozen Nationals."

Both left the room, to meet, fifteen minutes later, in the street before the building. Flourens was attended by a squad of men.

"Where are the carriages?" he inquired.

"They have orders to follow us at a distance."

"That will do. Now, forward to the work."

He proceeded, in Dupre's company, attended by the guards, while the carriages followed at a distance. They had gone but a short distance, when Dupre pointed to a house across the street, and said:

"There is No. 124."

"Then *this* must be Pordu's house. Exactly, here is his name on the plate. Now, Dupre, proceed as quietly as possible. It is easier to ride on a whirlwind, than to rule a mob. You, Sir, keep your men out of sight, but ready for action."

The Nationals fell back, and Dupre crossed the street. Flourens himself stepped up to the entrance and rung the bell. A young woman opened the door and inquired after his wishes.

"I understand there is a friend of mine, Mr. Bouvois, in this house. Is he at home?"

"He is," replied Emily, somewhat surprised at the early betrayal of the secret. "Have the goodness to step in?"

She conducted him to the room, where he found Robert sitting on a chair and turning the leaves of a book.

"Henry, here is a friend of yours, who desires to see you."

Robert rose to meet the visitor; but he had no sooner cast a look upon his face, when he started back, and exclaimed in the accents of consternation:

"Flourens!"

"You have a good memory," said the new-comer, with a smile. "It is a good while since we met last."

Robert struggled for self-possession.

"Friends generally have numerous communications to exchange," Flourens continued. "Would Mademoiselle have the goodness to grant us a private interview?"

Emily had noticed Robert's agitation, and become alarmed as well. She hesitated and looked at him inquiringly. In the meantime Robert had recovered from his surprise. The withdrawal of the young girl could do no harm, so he turned to her and said, pleasantly:

"Let it be as this gentleman desires. We shall not long deprive you of the use of your room."

His words reassured her.

"Never mind me, gentlemen," she said. "I am sure you are welcome to the room as long as you want it."

With these words she withdrew, and the quondam friends but present enemies were alone. Robert was the first to speak.

"Well, Sir," he said, pointedly. "what does this visit signify? Do I behold in you a friend or foe?"

He drew his revolver during these words, a circumstance showing plainly how seriously he doubted the friendly intentions of the visitor.

Flourens smiled.

"Why, Robert," he replied; "that might greatly depend upon the explanation of your presence here."

Robert made an impatient gesture.

"Of course I didn't come to make love here," he said. "Construe my presence in the worst light, and then answer my question: What do you want?"

"In that case, Monsieur Le Brun, I come to arrest you."

"Indeed!" said Robert in a scornful voice. "And you imagine that an easy matter? I did not come to Paris to be arrested."

"I suppose you did not," replied Flourens, preserving his blandness and courtesy. "But then a person is sometimes disappointed, you know."

"We are all subject to disappointments," said Robert. "You, for instance, will be disappointed if you expect to take me hence a living man."

Flourens viewed him with a mixture of affection and admiration.

"Sit down, my friend, and let us reason the matter," he said, calmly, taking a chair himself, and motioning Robert to another.

"You prefer to stand? Very well, I am the last person to restrict individual liberty. But don't get impatient if I state the case calmly."

Robert made merely a gesture of impatience.

"The case stands thus," Flourens resumed. 'Half-an-hour ago I was in my office with a certain Mr. Dupre,—you know Dupre, Alcibiades Dupre?"

Robert started at this name and nodded.

"Very well. All at once a fellow comes into the room, and tells us that we would find a certain German officer, called Le Brun, at this house, and a certain lady, called Miss Pauline Del·mont, in the house across."

Here Robert interrupted him with an exclamotion of painful surprise.

"You feel alarmed, Monsieur? Mon Dieu, you have reason, I assure you. When Dupre heard the news, he roared like a lion, and spoke about raising a mob to lynch you. I did not like the idea. I was foolish enough to allow old recollections to rise within my mind. I am a Frenchman, a *patriotic* Frenchman; but the pledges and oaths of olden times over-came my patriotism, and I resolved to save you. No demonstrations, Sir, if you please; I am not half through yet. I resolved to save you. But how accomplish it? that was the question. It was a knotty one, I warrant you. This Dupre is a savage brute, ready to pounce upon you. To let him go would have been your ruin: to disappoint him would have been *mine.* These mobs are dangerous weapons: they cut both ways. It would not do then to let you escape. I was compelled to arrest you *for our mutual safety.* Do you now comprehend? Are you still ready to resist your capture, revolver in hand?"

"And who warrants me the sincerity of your intentions?"

"My oath, my word of honor, both of which I pledge you freely. Just reflect a moment, Robert. No earthly power can save you from arrest or death, if you repel my mediation. Dupre is without. He can raise a mob in a few minutes, a mob that will delight in hunting you to death, and tear your body into a

thousand shreds. These Parisian mobs are ugly institutions, Robert."

"But Miss Delmont?" inquired Robert, with deep concern in his voice. "Supposlng I submit to your dictates: what will become of her?"

Flourens shrugged his shoulders.

"I am neither omnipotent nor omniscient, my friend," he said. "But does her fate so deeply concern you?"

"I value her welfare more highly than my life."

"Is that the case? I am sorry for you both, Robert. Bnt cheer up, my friend; we do not live in Turkey where a bashaw can *force* a girl into his harem. Besides, this state of things cannot last long. I suppose I will not injure my country by stating my belief that further resistance to your arms is not only useless but will soon be impossible. With this belief is it not sound policy to save the life of an old friend whose intercession may soon count heavily in my favor?"

This was said with a gloomy smile playing on the speaker's countenance. It evidently determined Robert, who put the revolver in his pocket, held out his hand and said:

"I accept your offer and your pledge, Flourens."

"And you give your word of honor to abstain from any attempts to escape on the way to prison ?"

"Why do you want my word?" inquired Robert, with renewed suspicion."

"How dull you are!" said Flourens, with a touch of impatience. "Don't you see that it is our interest to avoid all needless publicity? If you refuse to give your word, I have to order an escort. I am bound to save you in spite of you."

"Well, have your way," said Robert. "I deliver myself entirely to your generosity."

"That is a wise determination. But now take your hat and fol low me. There is a carriage for us in the street. Do you want to say farewell to your hostess?"

"No, no! It would only embarrass me. We may as well depart at once."

The two now left the room. They had reached the street, before Emily became aware of their intention. She hastened to

the front door, and came in time to see how Robert's companion spoke to a squad of Nationals, and then proceeded to a carriage into which they both entered. The driver whipped his horses, and, a minute later, the carriage had disappeared. A vague sensation of alarm seized the girl's heart. What could these mysterious movements all mean? Did they portend danger to the man who, in a few hours, had made such a deep impression upon her heart? With a heavy sigh she re-entered the house, the prey of the most unbearable of all sensations—suspense.

CHAPTER XXIII.

While Flourens thus obeyed the dictates of his heart rather than those of duty, Dupre was very differently engaged. We know that he approached the house of Monsieur Breux. With him we shall now enter, and hear him inquire for Miss Pauline Delmont. Maurice was aware of the young lady's relations to her cousin; but he did not know him personally. So, when the stranger inquired for her, he told him, that she lived up stairs, and begged him to ascend and communicate his wishes to the servants whom he would find in the first room. Dupre obeyed; but, as he was anxious to see the mistress and not the servants, he passed the first room with stealthy step and never stopped until he stood before the door at the end of the passage. Even then he dispensed with the usual form of knocking; but, turning the knob, opened the door and entered the room. Pauline stood with her face to the window, busily engaged in packing some clothes. Ascribing the informal entrance to her servant, she said, without turning:

"Is that you, Jeannette? Where in the world may Jean be? I need his company for a little walk I mean to take."

"Perhaps my fair cousin might deign to accept *my* company instead."

The first word made Pauline start, and caused her to confront the intruder with the rapidity of lightning. The voice had awak-

ened an unpleasant echo in her bosom; but when, on turning, she saw her suspicion verified, a short scream of terror escaped her lips. This scream drew Jeannette from her room, and no sooner did the faithful girl behold the visitor, than she too uttered a cry of dismay. After that she folded her hands, and remained a mute witness of the following scene.

Pauline's scream had brought a derisive smile to Dupre's lips.

"My presence seems neither expected nor agreeable," he said. "Permit me to express my regret at both."

But Pauline Delmont was not the girl to submit tamely to what she considered an imposition. Overcoming her consternation with commendable rapidity, she said, indignantly:

"I want neither your excuses nor your presence. How can you dare to thus violate the privacy of my room?"

"Oh! as to boldness," he said, with a sneer, "a certain young lady and cousin of mine set me a good example. Was it not bold, perhaps, to elope from home and friends?"

"Bold, or not bold, thank God, I am not responsible to you for my actions. You are my fathers ward. I act in the capacity of his deputy."

"I do not recognize your authority. Once for all: free me of your hateful presence and leave this room."

"And if I refuse to comply?"

"Then I shall request my landlord to teach you manners."

Dupre smiled scornfully in the corsciousness of his impregnable position.

"Before you carry out your threat", he said with an affected calmness, "allow me to make a single statement. *In your house across the way was, but fifteen minutes ago, a German officer, hailing by the name of Miller, alias Le Brun.*"

These few words, so simple in themselves, had a terrible effect on the poor girl. She gasped; a tremor shook her body and she had to seize the back of a chair to keep from falling. A painful moan was all the reply she was able to make.

"Oho! My lady seems interested in my statement", Dupre resumed with the previous touch of mockery in his voice. "That

encourages me to make another. Monsieur Miller is no longer in the house: *he is on his way to prison.*"

"Monster!" was all Pauline could utter.

"Thank you Madam. Such kindness on your part deserves a return. I continue in my statements. Monsieur Miller will not remain in prison very long. *He has been arrested for a spy* and will *either be shot, or abandoned to the mercy of the populace*, before the clock strikes eight to-morrow morning. Has my lady any other titles to confer on me? I like to have an equivalent for my revelations."

"Monster!" Pauline exclaimed a second time. Then, unable to bear up any longer under such terrible disclosures, she sank upon a sofa, the very sofa which had witnessed her recent happiness, and broke out into a series of convulsive sobs. Jeannette hastened to her assistance and tried to soothe her with the most comforting words. Not so Dupre who seemed determined to the end.

"Your favorite is lost", he began anew. "This time nobody can save him. There is no emperor to order his respite. No voice will intercede for the German spy; as the sun will rise to-morrow over Paris, just so surely will he shine upon his execution."

Continued sobs on the part of Pauline; idle efforts to console her on the part of Jeannette. For five minutes Dupre maintained an impressive silence. At last he resumed in a solemn tone.

"There is only one man in Paris able to save him—and that man stands before you."

Pauline's hands disappeared from her face; she raised her head and looked with tearful eyes at her tormentor.

"Why do you say that, *you* who seek his death with the eagerness of the bloodhound?"

"True, I did at one time—I do not now. Circumstances alter cases. I have lost my interest in the destruction of this fellow."

Pauline rose to her feet.

"But why do you tell me this? You do not speak at random; you are too cunning, too designing for that."

"You deserve credit for your penetration. I spoke indeed to a purpose, as you will perceive, if you listen to me a moment lon-

ger. I told you before that I am the only man in Paris bold enough to undertake his rescue: I now add that I possess not merely the courage but also the disposition to deliver him."

Pauline made a start towards the speaker. Her countenance brightened and her hands were stretched out imploringly.

"Is it possible!" she cried. "Do you not merely say this to plunge me with new-born hopes more deeply into despair? Oh tell me how this miracle came about?"

"There is no miracle about it, Pauline Delmont", he replied with an ugly smile, "I am too practical a man for your Utopia, where men are virtuous merely for virtue's sake. In undertaking this ticklish job, I run a risk and for that risk I expect a compensation. In other words you can hire me, provided you pay me well."

Pauline's face fell visibly.

"Pay you?" she stammered. "How can I pay you?"

"Oh easily. All you have to do, is to comply with two conditions!"

"And these conditions!"

"Are easily fulfilled."

"Name them! name them!"

"You'll know them soon enough. The first is: you must follow me willingly from this house."

"And the second?"

"You must become my wedded wife before the hour of midnight."

Pauline shrank back in horror. Then, suddenly, she broke out into a laugh, so hollow and unnatural, that it created a chilling sensation even in Dupre's hardened breast.

"Fool that I was to take your words in earnest!" she exclaimed. "But fool also that *you* are to think that you could entrap me in so obvious a snare. Marry you to-night to see you feed your eyes to-morrow on his gory head! Maddening, as your revelations are, I am not as yet sufficiently insane to accept such a monstrous proposal."

He winced under her words and quailed beneath her searching glances.

"And what conditions *will* you accept then?" he inquired sullenly.

"No conditions falling due before the fulfillment of the stipulated work, at all events."

"Then, will you marry me to-morrow morning?

"In time you mean to recover the fugitive?"

He looked furiously.

"You will not listen to *any* terms, I see. Well, let it be so. The churl may die, for all I care. On *your* head come his blood!"

He turned to go, perhaps merely pretending to do so. However that may be, Pauline gave him no time to execute the measure.

"Stop!" she cried with a voice which clearly betrayed the fearful struggle raging in her bosom. "You shall not leave me thus with false pretenses, invoking on me the wrath of heaven for the immolation of *your* victim."

"I give you a chance to save this victim. By rejecting this chance, *you* destroy him, not I."

"But to spare your victim you require another. Alcibiades, is there nothing short of this terrible demand that you would be willing to accept? Listen to my prayer! Have pity for once! Behold me here on my knees imploring you for mercy as you hope for mercy on the day of judgement!"

He looked at her cold and unmoved.

"You have a fine talent for oratory", he said. "You could make capital out of it on the stage, no doubt; but as to me, I am proof against such tricks. If you want to move *me*, get up and show that you mean business. Time flies rapidly and if you want to save your darling, husband the precious minutes."

Pauline had risen, her mien expressing a mixture of anguish and disgust. She struggled silently for a minute; then she replied:

"Well, let it be then, as you say. If there is to be a victim let me furnish it. But to marry you to-morrow? Never! Listen to the only terms I can concede."

A calm resignation had taken the place of her previous excitement; but so grand and beautiful did she look in her exaltation that Dupre felt more cowed than ever.

"If Robert Le Brun escape this coming night through *your* influence and exertion from his prison and this city, so as to reach the German lines in perfect safety, I shall, six months from now, reach you my hand before God's altar."

A wild joy flamed up in Dupre's eyes.

"Here is a Bible, I see," he said. Have you any objection to swear to this your promise?"

"I have not; although I would have kept my promise as faithfully as my oath."

"I am satisfied. In regard to the other conditions, you have no scruples, I suppose."

"Your supposition is fallacious. After my promise it can make no difference to you where I reside. I prefer greatly to remain where I am."

"But in case of a bombardment, you would be in danger here."

"I am in God's hands wherever I stay."

This was said with so much simplicity and sincerity that Dupre did not venture to object.

"Very well," he said, after a while. "Be it as you wish. Of course you will have no liberty to withdraw from here; for your promise implies that I shall find you at the appointed time."

"You shall find me here. But do not forget that these six months are *mine*, and that I shall suffer no intrusion on any pretext whatever."

"You are severe," he grumbled, "and I hardly know why I suffer myself to be treated in this fashion. However, you have the best of me just now, and I shall abide my time. But when my term of probation is over: then, Madam, I shall suffer no earthly power to prevent me from seizing the costly prize. Until then, Madam, farewell!"

He turned and left the room, No sooner had the door closed upon him, when Pauline threw herself with a cry of the wildest anguish upon the bosom of the faithful servant-girl and sobbed as if her heart would break. Poor girl! she had secured a great boon; but she had bought it at a fearful cost.

The interview had been too noisy to escape the attention of the people down stairs. As long as Dupre remained, they abstaiued from showing themselves; but no sooner had he departed

than they appeared at the door, evincing in their anxious faces so much solicitude that Pauline felt touched.

"Come in, good friends," she said. "I have nothing to hide from you."

"That man did not harm you?" inquired Maurice. "I felt like interfering all the while; but abstained because I was afraid of being considered forward. Besides I thought if you had needed my assistance—"

"I should have called on you. You are right, Mr. Breux. I had a hard battle to fight with that man; but it was voluntary on my part, and you could not have rendered me any assistance."

"And is there anything I can do for you?"

"No, my friend, not to my knowledge. Only you might send Jean; I want to give him some orders."

"Jean is not in the house, Madam, nor Antoine either. They must have gone out together. But listen, there is a knock. It comes from Antoine's room. I'll just run down, and see what's the matter."

Ten minutes afterwards he returned in company with Jean, who had sobered down sufficiently to preserve his balance. He looked very sheepish and crest-fallen, however, and hung his head to avoid the glances of those present.

"Why, what is this, Jean?" Jeannette accosted him, rather sharply. "You have been drinking again, confess it."

"I don't deny it," he said, sullenly. "But it wasn't my fault; I was drawn into it."

"Drawn into it!" echoed Jeannette. "Aint you man enough to resist temptation? A fine excuse, indeed! And who drew you in, please?"

"Antoine."

"It was in Antoine's room I found him locked up," said Maurice, gravely. "What on earth can have been my brother's motive?"

"He said he wanted to celebrate his birth-day which falls on the 26th of October."

"Did he tell you so?" inquired Maurice, in amazement.

"Of course he did."

"Then he has imposed on you. He was born in the month of May."

Jeannette had been an attentive listener. At Maurice's last words she started.

"Oh, mercy! I think I understand it all now!" she cried, wringing her hands. "Antoine has set Dupre upon our track."

"Jeannette!" Maurice exclaimed, reproachfully. "Do you know that you utter a grave accusation against my brother?"

"I am sorry, but it is the truth. I can prove every word I say. When the young stranger called this morning, I heard Antoine creep up stairs with ever so much caution. Now, what did he do that for? To pry into affairs that didn't concern him. When he saw me, he turned as red as a beet. Then he inquired for Jean. Now, what did he want Jean for? To pump him, of course. There he stands, the wretch who is mean enough to babble his mistress' secrets. Get out of my sight, Sir, for you are entirely mistaken if you think that I shall hereafter own you."

Jean stood there, the very image of contrition.

"I did not mean to," at last he stammered forth. "What I said I said under the influence of liquor, and if I betrayed any secrets, Antoine had no business to make a big fuss about it."

"There Antoine again!" said Maurice, sadly. "Where can he be? I wish he were here to answer these grave charges."

"You won't see him very soon, I reckon," replied Jeannette. "He'll be slow to see the mischief he has worked."

"Then I must try to find him. I want this doubt cleared up. If he is innocent I want him to have the benefit of the discovery. If he has actually betrayed his brother's friends, he must no longer disgrace my house with his presence."

The seed of evil grows fast. Like cancer, iniquity is sure to spread and destroy peace and happiness all around. Maurice and his wife returned to their quarters a troubled couple. The former took his hat and cane and visited all the places which his brother was in the habit of frequenting. At the expiration of two hours he returned without having found the slightest trace of the missing one. When dusk set in, a double shade fell upon the household. Sorrow up stairs—anxiety below. The meal was taken in silence. It was no sooner finished than Pauline returned

to her room, and there gave herself up to the painful pleasure of revelling in her grief. At first Jeannette attempted to put in an occasional word or two of comfort; but when she saw that these attempts were not only impatiently received, but even fretfully rejected, she withdrew to her own room, and gave to Jean the benefit of an eloquence which she was prevented from practising on her mistress.

As darkness increased, the streets began to exhibit an unusual degree of activity. The tread of many persons was heard coupled with the peculiar hum arising from the voices of a large and animated crowd. At first these sounds escaped the ear of the mourning maiden; but when the tumult increased, shrill cries of individuals rising above the general din, she became attentive and went to the window to learn the nature of the commotion. Here she was joined by Jeannette, who always sought the protecting presence of her mistress when anything alarmed her.

"Dear me! what is going on now?" she inquired, anxiously. Pauline of course could not tell her; but a few distant cries soon convinced them that the commotion was of a political character.

"A bas les ministres! vive la commune! On to the prison! Let's liberate the victims of tyranny!"

These and other cries rose to the ears of the listeners. "On to the prison!" sounded especially significant to Pauline Delmont. Could this tumult have anything to do with Dupre's plans? Was he influential enough to thus sway the masses? Was he able to do it in so short a time? Not quite three hours had elapsed since his visit, and already the street was the scene of commotion, the people seeming ripe for any kind of mischief.

Her heart beat violently at these thoughts; but soon the increasing riot paralyzed all power of thinking, her mind centering in her eyes and ears to watch the development of affairs. The crowd did not stand still. It floated like the waves of an endless stream, now thinner, now condensed, sending forth passionate cries and exclamations, as the overcharged galvanic battery sends forth the fiery spark.

Towards ten o'clock a figure approached the house, opened the door by means of a key and entered.

"It is Maurice," said Jeannette. "Shall I tell him to come up stairs?"

"No, let us go down," replied Pauline, and a minute later the two stood in the room below, where Maurice Breux had thrown himself into an arm-chair, resting from exertions which seemed to have exhausted his strength.

"What is the matter, Monsieur Breux," inquired Pauline; "what do the people want?"

"That, Madam, is hard to say. I really doubt whether they know it themselves. The Parisians are excitable, you see, and the slightest provocation makes them spit fire and flame."

"Then they merely amuse themselves shouting and yelling?"

"Not exactly. From shouting to acting is but a single step. The people are tired of the siege and its privations; and, being unable to spend their spleen upon the Germans, they wreak it upon their own government."

"Is it possible? Did they not, a few short weeks ago, greet this very government with the wildest enthusiasm?"

"They did, Madam; but a few weeks is a long period for a Parisian mob. They are simply tired of Trochu, of Favre and their colleagues, and clamor for a change. And a change they will have before to morrow night, if I am not mistaken."

"Then they have committed overt acts of insurrection?"

"Overt and flagrant, I assure you. I witnessed their attack upon the city-prison."

"The city-prison!" exclaimed Pauline, eagerly. "Oh, Monsieur Maurice, please tell us all about it."

"Indeed, there isn't much to be told. I suffered myself to be carried off by the crowd, which seemed to be bound for the jail. I judged so from their cries, for every second shout I heard was: *to the prison*! When I arrived on the spot, the night was lit up by many torches. I saw how axes battered down the heavy doors; I heard the savage shout of a thousand voices hail the disappearance of the obstacle. The mob rushed in, and, ten minutes later, there wasn't a prisoner in the building."

"And that was all?"

"Well, what else would you expect? That was all as far as the prison is concerned. The people continued their shouting, their

singing and marching. There, listen, they haven't tired yet. I shouldn't wonder if some would stick to it all night."

"But there will be no further excesses?"

"That's hard to tell, Miss Pauline. I am afraid they are bent upon mischief. If they carry out half their threats, they'll make an attempt to-morrow to upset the government."

After a few further remarks the family retired to bed. Their slumber, however, was frequently interrupted by riotous demonstrations in the street. Nor did these demonstrations cease in the morning. On the contrary, they seemed to gain new strengtn with the return of day-light, and it soon became evident that the apprehensions of Maurice Breux would be verified. Early in the morning armed bands organized in different parts of the city, and then marched towards a common center, the city-hall, conducted by able but reckless leaders, who endeavored to excite the passions of the mob to fever heat by all the means in their possession.

In the city-hall the regular government held its sessions. The members had not anticipated this revolt, and were therefore, for the moment, without the means to suppress it. Flourens and his associates triumphed, and took the entire committee of defense prisoners. In their place Flourens appointed a new committee of safety, consistimg of such men as Ledru Rollin, Blanqui and Victor Hugo. We find the tribune, flushed with success, in the city-hall, exercising with commendable zeal the functions of his self-assumed position. At that moment he was dictator. When he heard that Picard, Trochu, Jules Simon, Magnin and Ferry had made their escape, he ordered Jules Favre, Garnier-Pages and Tamisier, to be watched with double vigilance. Not content with the success achieved in the city of Paris, he resolved to send his apostle out into the provinces to preach the doctrine of the red republic, and push at the same time the preparations for the expulsion of the German hosts. For such a mission he needed his most devoted disciples, and so we need not wonder to find Alcibiades Dupre amongst their number. To him Flourens gave the special commission to agitate the districts in the German rear; to organize bands of franc-tireurs, and to do the enemy tall the injury in his power. Dupre showed himself willing enough to accept this charge. To reside in Paris just then did not offer

any particular charm. The society of Pauline Delmont was forbidden him for six months, and so he declared himself ready to start upon his mission without delay, although he knew that he would have to make his exit from the city by balloon. The government kept these æronautic apparatuses ready for the regular mail-service, and so Flourens found no difficulty in dispatching his messengers that very day. There were three passengers besides Dupre. The balloon was filled; the passengers took their seats; the mail-bags were deposited at their feet; the rope which held the machine was cut, and, amidst the shouts of the assembled multitude, the balloon shot upwart into the air.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The hope that the surrender of Napoleon and his army at Sedan would lead to peace proved fallacious. November shows as many bloody conflicts as any other period of this short but sanguinary war. The Army of the Loire fought on the 17th the battle of Dreux; on the 18th that of Chateauneuf; on the 21st that of Bretonzelles; on the 28th that of Beaume la Rolande.

The Army of the North, under the leadership of Manteufel, was equally active. On the 27th it defeated the French in a bloody battle near Amiens, and, on the 28th, took that important city.

The army of Paris made, in that month, two sorties, the first one, on the 20th, at L'Hoy; the second and bloodier one, on the 30th, at Cretil. This latter sortie came nearer being a success than any previous attempt on the part of the besieged army. The French drove back the investing forces, and advanced as far as Brie and Champigny, which villages they held until the 2nd of December. On that day the Germans assaulted the two places with great vigor, and, although the French maintained the ground during the entire struggle, they saw themselves finally compelled to evacuate the villages, to destroy the pontoon-bridges, by means of which they had crossed the Marne, and to retreat to

their old position under the guns of the forts, thus virtually conceding the palm to their enemies.

The Germans, however, suffered severely in the combat. The Bavarian jægers, who had participated, were decimated. Haller had two horses killed under him. Schultze received an ulgy flesh-wound in his thigh, and Miller, who had thus far escaped without a scratch, had his left arm shattered by a musket-ball. Fortunately one of the sugeons of the regiment was near at hand. He examined the fracture and pronounced it bad but curable. Miller, who had already feared an amputation, breathed more freely at this announcement, and willingly obeyed the surgeon who bandaged the arm temporarily, and told Miller to go at once to the next hospital and have the wound properly attended to, if he wished to preserve the limb. Our friend possessed that dread of being crippled to which even the bravest are subject. He could storm a battery without wincing; but trembled at the thought of losing an arm. This dread made him docile. It induced him to follow implicitly the directions of the head-surgeon who advised the greatest care.

"You ought to take a month's furlough, and go to Nancy or Kaiserslautern," he said. "We are too thronged here to give your arm the proper attention. Besides, you ought to be removed from the excitement of actual warfare."

To obtain this furlough was an easy matter. On the second of December he had been wounded, and, on the afternoon of the third, Haller handed him the necessary papers. At the same time the major was the bearer of a royal gift to both Miller and Schultze. This gift consisted of nothing less than the Iron Cross, the coveted badge of distinction for extraordinary bravery. Robert's eyes beamed with pleasure at the reception of the gift; but a moment later a shadow passed over his face.

"And you?" he inquired of Haller.

The major with a smile unbuttoned his over-coat and displayed the badge on his breast.

"All right," said Robert. "Now I am satisfied. This is a splendid balm for a broken arm. You'll see it will heal a whole month before the regular time."

"Let it have its regular time, Robert," said Schultze. "Gladly

as we shall hail your return: you'll be subject to our severest reprimand, if you show your face a moment too soon."

Robert promised punctual obedience to their wishes, and, with their assistance, climbed into the carriage which was to take him to the next railroad station. After a last shake of his unharmed right, the horses started and soon carried him out of the sight of his friends.

"It feels so queer to be without him," said Schultze, scratching his head. "I wish the 'parlez-vous' would make another sortie just to give me something to do."

"Don't you fret!" replied Haller, with a laugh. "You'll get enough of their sorties yet, I warrant you."

They separated to attend to their respective duties. On the next morning, however, Schultze rushed into Haller's room, the greatest consternation depicted on his face.

"Halloa! What's the matter now? Another sortie?"

"Worse, Haller, a great deal worse. There was an accident on the eastern railway last night."

"And that puts you in such a frenzy?"

"Oh, Haller, how short-sighted you are! Have you forgotten Robert Miller?"

This question brought Haller to his feet.

"It wasn't his train, was it? Speak, August; has he been hurt?"

"Yes, worse than that."

"What! killed?"

He grasped Schultze's arm in painful suspense.

"Not killed, but missing."

"How can that be?" Haller asked, impatiently. "Come, come, explain your Job's post."

"I shall, if you will let me get my breath."

He heaved a mournful sigh, and then resumed:

"The accident happened near Changis, where the train fell through a bridge into the Marne."

"How is that possible? Every railroad bridge is guarded."

"It seems that the guard of this one were surprised by franc-tireurs. The dispatch speaks of traces of a fight, which seems to have occurred near the bridge previous to the disaster. It asks

for reinforcements to pursue and punish the perpetrators of the deed."

"Was anybody killed?"

"Yes, quite a number."

"And Robert is reported missing?"

"Yes, Sir. It seems that the passenger-list was afterwards recovered. The dispatch says especially that Lieutenant Miller could not be found."

"Perhaps—his body—lies in the Marne."

Schultze groaned aloud.

"That unhappy thought! I too have been compelled to entertain it."

Haller pressed his hand upon his bosom, as if he wanted to stifle his emotions by one powerful effort.

"It isn't certain, August," he said, as if he wanted to console himself as well as Schultze.

"No, we have the benefit of a doubt; but that doubt is more painful than the worst certainty. It must not continue," said Schultze.

"It shall not continue. Still we must hope until we know the worst. Where is the unlucky dispatch?"

"On the way to head-quarters."

"Then to head-quarters we must go. Please have two horses saddled, while I get ready."

Five minutes later Haller stepped from the building. At the same time two horses were led to the door. Mounting one and beckoning Schultze to follow his example, he set spurs to his steed and forced it to a rapid galop. Schultze kept close to his heels, and in less than an hour they had reached Versailles. They stopped at head-quarters, and, as Haller's capacity of adjutant gave him free access to the interior, the two entered without delay. Just as they entered the anti-room of Frederic William, the prince stepped from his cabinet. His brow was contracted, and he sent his eye searchingly across the room. When it met Haller, his face lit up, and, beckoning the new-comer with his hand, he said:

"Come in, major."

He turned, followed by Haller, while Schultze remained in the

ante-room When the prince had reached his cabinet, he turned, and said, with an animated voice:

"I am glad I noticed you. We received a telegram just now that requires immediate attention. Just think of it! The franc-tireurs have had the boldness to blow up a railroad bridge, and take the passengers prisoners."

"I heard of it, Highness. Indeed it is this dispatch which brought me here so rapidly."

"I knew I could count on your energetic co-operation. I sent for Moltke, although the case is clear enough. These fellows must be punished with such rigor as to lose all relish for a repetition of the offense."

"That is my opinion, and if your Royal Highness would entrust me with the execution of the penalty, I should consider myself under lasting obligations."

"Why so? You go yourself? That would hardly be necessary. But here comes Moltke. Excellency, have you already heard of this nefarious business?"

"Nothing but rumors, Prince. Have you authentic news? A telegram? With your permission—"

The general glanced over the dispatch. All at once he started.

"What! Lieutenant Miller!" he said, with contracted brows. "If the rascals have hurt a hair upon his head, I shall hang every mother's son of them."

"It is for *his* sake, Highness, that I want the command of the expedition," Haller ventured to remark. Moltke looked around, and nodded:

"Ah, major, that is you. He is your friend? You cannot have a better one. Prince, let him go at all events."

"But oughtn't we to send cavalry?"

"No, no, Highness. It is cunning, not swiftness, that catches these rascals. What troops do you belong to, major?"

"The Bavarian jægers."

"The very men, Highness. Bold, smart, active: you couldn't pick more suitable fellows if you hunted the army all over."

"Well, have your way then, general. How strong a force have you at your disposal?"

"Eight hundred."

"That ought to do. You'd better go at once and get them ready. Where are they stationed?"

"At Choisy."

"Very well. To Choisy I shall send the necessary papers as soon as executed. Farewell, major; God speed you."

Haller saluted and left the room.

"Quick, August, I have been commissioned to attend to this affair. The jægers go with me."

"Hurrah! And I?"

"Why, you belong to them, of course?"

"Hurrah again! But now we won't save horse flesh, will we?"

"I reckon not."

They jumped on, and the horses soon discovered to their cost that their riders had little regard for the safety of the necks of either men or beasts. Never before had Schultze ridden so recklessly. When they reached Choisy, the horses were covered with foam and their own brows with perspiration, in spite of the cold, which was considerable.

Two grooms took the steaming horses, wondering at such recklessness on the part of an officer noted for his consideration. Haller stepped into the guard-room and, a minute later, the signal-horn sounded through the village.

"Jæger heraus!"

The call was obeyed with alacrity, and, in less than ten minutes, the battalion stood in rank and file. Haller convoked the captains.

"Get your men ready to start at once on a longer expedition. Let them provide themselves with three day's rations and ammunition. I want them to re assemble in less than thirty minutes."

The order was promulgated and the men scattered to their respective quarters. They wondered at this sudden order; but their wonderment did not prevent them from obeying with that readiness and precision which has been one of the distinguishing features of this war. The time of grace was not nearly expended when every man stood in his place. Haller ordered them to form a hollow square: then, stepping into the center, he addressed them.

"Boys," he said, "it is the duty of a good soldier to obey his

officer implicitly. I am sure that you would follow me blindfolded into the jaws of death. Yet I prefer to tell you the nature of the expedition on which we are about to start. It is not merely discipline I ask of you to-day: the task before you requires intelligence as well. We are on the point of moving against a band of guerillas, and, in order to conquer them, we must fight like them. By this I do not mean that we must blacken our fame with such misdeeds as those of which they have shown themselves guilty, (indeed the slightest violation of discipline will meet with punishment both certain and severe;) but rather that you must learn to fall back upon your own resources, whenever the nature of this conflict deprives you of the support of your officers. Perhaps you have learned that a band of franc-tireurs has attacked a train with sick and wounded to wreak upon them the wrath which they are too cowardly to spend in open battle. Some of the passengers were killed, some wounded, and others again were carried into a captivity more intolerable by far than death. They are your comrades: men who have fought side by side with you. One of them even belonged to this battalion. You knew him; you loved him. I need hardly tell you that I allude to Robert Miller, as brave, as good, as kind a man and officer, as ever lived. He was on the train, and, as he cannot be found amongst the dead and wounded, we are compelled to number him with the *missing*. You know what it means to be missing under such circumstances. If he lives he looks to you for deliverance; if he is dead he looks to you for vengeance. Here comes the adjutant with our instructions. Let us never rest until we have fulfilled our mission and added a new laurel-leaf to the wreath which the jægers have woven through this war!"

Discipline prevented the outbreak of the enthusiasm which Haller's words had kindled in the men; but their eyes sparkled, their hands clasped the musket more firmly, and they waited for the moment of departure with an impatience which showed clearly how eager they were for the fray.

The papers delivered by the adjutant consisted of Haller's commission, and an order of the quarter-master-general to the railroad-officials to furnish, at their earliest convenience, a train

for one battalion of men. This order Haller at once dispatched by a mounted messenger to Lagny, the nearest railroad station, and then marched his troops to the same place on double quick. Lagny is over twenty miles from Choisy; but so well did the jægers keep up their march that they reached the depot in less than seven hours. The etappier was considerably embarrassed.

"The accident at Changis has delayed the eastern trains," he said to Haller. "We have absolutely nothing but a cattle-train, the cars of which haven't even been cleaned."

"Oh, never mind," said Haller, laughing. "We haven't lately slept on roses, and can stand a little *odeur de bœuf*—can we not comrades? Where is your train, Sir."

"Over there, major."

"And how soon can you have a locomotive ready?"

"In fifteen minutes."

"All right then. You get your engine out, while we attend to the cars. Volunteers for cleaning the cars, step forward!"

The jægers laughed and the whole battalion stepped forward in a solid body.

"Form line! seize forks! attack train!" commanded Haller amidst universal merriment, and the men set to work with a good will. Pitchforks, shovels, sticks, old brooms: everything of that nature was in great demand. While some emptied the cars of the litter with which the cattle had been bedded, others carried water and cleansed the woodwork to the best of their ability. When the locomotive steamed up, the job was done, and the jægers climbed into the cars with that good-nature which is invariably coupled with true bravery. There were no benches for either the officers or privates; but all comforted themselves with the thought that the trip was but a short one, and improvised seats out of their knapsacks or anything else that would answer the purpose. When the train at last started, dusk began to settle upon the country. The weather was rather cold, and the open cars allowed a cutting wind to sweep through without a check. Still, the jægers managed to keep up their spirits, partly by imbibing the spirits of their flasks, partly by singing and making merry over their want of comfort, and the sweet odor of their quarters. Five miles from Lagny, the train passed over the

Marne: after traversing double that distance it reached Meaux. Here the conductor stopped long enough to ascertain whether they could proceed without danger of a collision. When he learned that the bridge at Changis was still in process of repair he again set the train in motion, until, almost an hour later, it stopped near the scene of the late disaster. The men were ordered to alight and remain stationary until the present condition of affairs could be ascertained. Haller accosted the engineer, under whose direction the reparation of the bridge was going on.

"Has anything new occurred in connection with this affair?" he inquired.

"Not to my knowledge, Sir. However we have been so busy with repairing the bridge—"

"That you had no time for anything else. Is there no military on the spot?"

"Yes, Sir. You'll find a small guard at the other end of the bridge."

"Is it passable?"

"For foot-passengers, yes."

Haller crossed the bridge and examined the officer in command of the small squad; but he too was unable to give any information that was calculated to throw light on the strength and position of the enemy. All he learned was that Changis lay a short distance from the bridge on the right bank of the Marne; that the village was deserted, and that the franc-tireurs had a hiding-place in the neighborhood which he had thus far been unable to discover. He added, however, that his force had been altogether too inadequate for the purpose, and that a thorough search might yield a very different result.

With these communications Haller had to content himself. He knew very well that precipitation is even a greater fault in a military leader than tardiness, and seeing that he could do nothing decisive that night, he resolved to provide as comfortable quarters for his men as he was able to procure. He marched them up the left bank of the Marne, until they reached the bridge which crosses the river at that place and leads right into the village. A few advance columns were pushed through the several streets without meeting a single human being. The surroundings were

examined as well, and when they also were found to be deserted, Haller permitted his men to quarter themselves in the various houses as best they could, exhorting them, however, to obey with alacrity the first signal for rallying, and taking, of course, the necessary measures of precaution, such as posting sentinels, providing for their relief, etc.

It was about nine o'clock when he himself entered the house which Schultze had chosen for their lodgings. A cheerful fire blazed in the grate, sending forth a genial heat which felt very pleasant after the long exposure to the cold of a blustering December-day. The major found Schultze engaged in setting the table, helping himself freely to plates, dishes, cups and saucers in the cupboard; while the orderly knelt before the grate and prepared a mocca whose aroma filled the room with a pleasant fragrance.

Haller took off his helmet, unbuckled his sword and dropped with a sigh of relief into an arm-chair near the fire.

"This looks comfortable," he said to Schultze. "It comes doubly apropos after our cold trip in the cattle-train."

"Yes indeed," replied Schultze, "and in a few minutes you shall have a supper such as Moltke himself won't get better in Versailles .There is nothing wanting to our comfort now but certainty regarding the condition and whereabouts of friend Robert."

"That's so," replied Haller with a sigh. "However, we must hope for the best. To-morrow's operations will surely throw light on this mysterious affair."

A few minutes later the meal stood on the table and was dispatched with the keen relish peculiar to the bivouacking soldier. After that the two officers pulled a couple of easy-chairs to the fire and indulged in that state of semi-torpor which is apt to seize upon the body after a cold and active day. The orderly had put a few bundles of straw into the empty bed-steads left by the runaway inhabitants, and the prospect of a good night's rest added to their comfort. At last they rose and were on the point of throwing themselves upon the bed, when the guard stationed before the house knocked at the door and informed them that a Frenchman had arrived who insisted upon seeing the commanding officer. Haller ordered him to be shown in, and the sentinel

had hardly retired, when a young man rushed rather than walked into the room. He wore an old, faded uniform and the light cap of the French foot-soldier. His face was pale and haggard, and its pallor was doubly impressive oh account of the excitement to which the young man had evidently fallen a prey.

"Herr Major," he gasped, in broken German. "Ick kommen zu sie sag—meiner Oncle—"

"Je parle francais," Haller interrupted him.

"Ah, merci, Monsieur, I thank you, Sir. I come to implore your aid in behalf of my uncle. He has fallen into the hands of the franc-tireurs who threaten to kill him and will no doubt carry out their menace if not compelled to give up their victim."

"The franc-tireurs kill a Frenchman! How do you account for that?"

"My uncle is a zealous adherent of the empire. These fellows, who are composed of the very scum of the populace, have been stirred up by communistic agents, and threaten with violence and death every person who differs from their views. But, major, I implore you do not tarry to examine me. Keep me as a hostage for my good behaviour, but send at once a force to release my uncle or the desperadoes will kill him before you get there."

Haller scanned the petitioner with a scrutinizing glance.

"Very well, be it as you wish," he said after a momentary pause. "But remember, if you deceive me, you pay the attempt with your life."

"I demand nothing else; but I repeat that haste is necessary to protect my uncle's life."

Haller dispatched Schultze to alarm the jægers and a minute later the signal-horn sounded through the village.

"Where will we find the franc-tireurs?" the major examined the Frenchman.

"About a mile from here on the left bank of the river."

"How many of them are there?"

"That's more than I can tell. I was wounded and captured in the battle of Wœrth, and at last paroled after a tedious reconnoisance. I had to travel slowly on account of my enfeebled health, and only reached my home this afternoon. There I found my uncle and former guardian, whose own estates have mostly

been destroyed. He was sorely distracted, partly on account of his losses, partly on account of the distressing way in which the war has scattered his family. His sister, his son, his niece,—they all had been taken from him, and, to complete his misery, the people of the neighborhood had begun to evince symptoms of a sudden and most unaccountable hostility. They had uttered savage threats and the few servants left in the establishment fed his apprehension by constant reports of intended attacks upon the castle. I for my part refused to credit these stories and attempted to reassure my uncle; but the events of the evening have plainly proved that his fears were too well founded."

"Then the castle was actually attacked?"

"It was, Sir, and in the most ferocious manner. The mob forced the door and at once seized my uncle. The servants fled. I had no arms; but grasping a cane attempted to defend my uncle as well as my feeble strength would permit. Of course, the attempt proved idle. I was disarmed and pushed aside in less time than it takes me to tell you."

"It is strange they should have spared you," said Haller, suspiciously.

"It seems strange and I marvelled myself at their unexpected leniency. I can account for it in no other way than that many of the rioters were former tenants of our family who still retain a shadow of the affection they once bore for the Delmonts."

"The who?" inquired Schultze, who had just re-entered the room.

"The Delmonts, Sir."

"Are you a Delmont?"

"I am, Sir."

"Have you a sister?"

"Yes, Sir."

"What is her name?"

"Pauline."

"I thought so. You resemble her strongly."

"Then you know my sister?" the young man eagerly inquired.

"I think I do, Sir," said Schultze, sarcastically. "I have had the pleasure of meeting her repeatedly." Then turning to Haller he said in German:

"This chap will bear watching. His sister has more than once tried to take Miller's life."

"His sister! a woman!" exclaimed Haller. "If the sister is guilty of such atrocities, what must we expect of the brother! If I had known this sooner I wonld not have alarmed the men. Perhaps we had better send them to their quarters again."

"Well, I don't know about that," said Schultze. "It would hardly be fair to make the brother responsible for the failings of the sister. He may be all right, and, in such a case, prove a valuable acquisition. I'd try him at all events. His life is at stake and under such circumstancs the greatest rogues are apt to be sincere."

The Frenchman had watched their conversation with the most painful suspense. He had caught the meaning of a word now and then, but lost the connection. He knew, moreover, that they were debating the propriety of acceeding to his demands, and therefore wavered between the desire of urging them and the fear of creating their displeasure by an untimely interruption. He was still hesitating about the propriety of interfering when an officer entered the room and announced the jægers ready for action. Haller, meanwhile, seemed to have decided on his course.

"It is well," he said, "I shall be with them in a minute." Then turning to Delmont he added in French:

"We are ready to follow you; but I repeat my warning. You will march between two guards with drawn revolvers. The slightest suspicion will send you to your last account."

"I accept your terms; but I assure you—"

"No more assurances, Monsieur," Haller interrupted him. "Let your actions speak instead. Have the goodness to lead the way."

Delmont walked out, followed by Haller and Schultze who found the jægers drawn up in the street. A few torches shed their lurid glare over the surroundings. Haller called two corporals by name. When they stood before him he said:

"You see this man?"

"Aye, aye, Sir."

"Very well, I charge you with his safe keeping. Here is a revolver for each of you. You are to walk on each side of him and keep the strictest watch upon his actions. If he makes the

slightest suspicious movement, you are to shoot him on the spot. Recollect it is of you that I shall ask him dead or alive."

"Aye, aye, Sir."

"Take your position then. *Eh bien, Monsieur*, lead the way."

Delmont obeyed at once and so eagerly did he start on his errand that Haller had to check him. He led the troops across the bridge and then along the left bank, following a road sufficiently broad and level to allow an easy and compact marching of the men. On the left the road was bordered by the Marne; on the right wooded hills rose abruptly to the height of several hundred feet. The place was well calculated for an ambush and Haller watched the prisoner and the surroundings with an anxious eye. Schultze's disclosures had aroused his suspicion, and so well did the nature of the region favor a surprise that the major would have given the order to retreat, if he had not feared to appear vacillating in the eyes of his officers. As it was he contented himself with the exercise of due caution, enjoining upon all the necessity of watching the hills with the greatest attention.

The troops had marched a little more than a mile, when the leader stopped and pointed to a narrow road on the right which wound up the hill in the bottom of a ravine.

"This is the road to the castle," he said to Haller.

"And how far is it to the castle?"

"Nearly a mile. After passing this ravine, you reach a wooded plateau on which you can manœuvre your men without trouble. I see the moon is on the point of rising, and, with its assistance, you will find no difficulty in surrounding the castle and capturing the whole rabble."

"You are severe on your countrymen."

"I have no sympathy with robbers and murderers."

"True they deserve none. Are you ready to proceed?"

Instead of an answer Delmont started for the ravine. It was a dark and narrow place, and a small party lying in ambush could have done fearful execution amongst the invaders. Nobody, however, attempted to check their progress, and, ten minutes later, they reached the plateau which Delmont had mentioned. Haller breathed more freely; at the same time his coffidence in their leader increased, and he turned to him for further advice. Del-

mont was on the point of giving it, when all at once a bright light shining through the trees startled and checked him.

"The castle is on fire!" he exclaimed. "For heaven's sake, hurry the men forward. No doubt they are torturing my poor uncle to death!"

"Just one more moment," said Haller. "Is there any wall around the castle?"

"Only a low stone-enclosure, over which your men can jump without difficulty."

"Are there no other obstacles in the road?"

"None whatever. The castle lies in the midst of an open park."

"Then I shall take my measures accordingly. Forward."

Again the troops advanced with rapid steps, until they reached the enclosure above mentioned. There they received the order to deploy to the right and left, until they met on the opposite side. This done the word "advance!" was rapidly but stealthily passed along the line, and, a moment later, they stood within the wall. The description of Delmont proved correct in every particular. No further obstacle impeded their progress, and soon they reached the inner square which formed the court-yard of the castle. The mansion itself formed one side of this square, while the barns and stables formed two more. The fourth side was enclosed by a substantial picket-fence, which had evidently been erected for the purpose of guarding the park against the encroachment of the various animals of the court. In the center of this fence was a broad gate which stood open. Through it and the open spaces of the picket-fence the jægers gazed upon a scene which was both strange and awful. The square contained perhaps two acres of ground. In its center a huge fire sent its lurid flames into the air, fed by straw, brush, boards, wagon-beds, and other combustible materials which a farm-yard is apt to furnish. Around this fire was a motley crowd of several hundred persons, in which both sexes and all ages were represented. The men predominated; but what the women and children lacked in numbers, they fully made up in noise and bustle. The whole crowd acted in the strangest manner. While some contented themselves with watching the fire with absorbing in-

terest, others yelled and shouted, and ran around it with every indication of savage delight. A third party displayed the greatest zeal in dragging to the fire fuel of every description. On the whole the scene had an aspect more weird, supernatural, and spectre-like, than the jægers had ever witnessed in their life. It reminded them strongly of their native legends in which demons and their associates dance in Walpurgis-night on the Blocksberg and other mountain-tops. But while they gaze spell-bound upon the strange scene, the actors themselves seemed altogether too much infatuated with their savage sport to notice the invaders. They were permitted to occupy the castle, the barns and stables, in short all the avenues to the court without molestation, and only when Haller finally caused the trumpeter to announce their presence by one shrill blast of the bugle, the revellers turned their attention to the enclosure to learn the cause. Never before, perhaps, did one single sound produce such a radical change. The mad shouts ceased instantly, as if drowned by an invisible flood; the frantic movements stopped and two hundred figures stood as if transfixed. It was a grand, a horrible tableaux, such as no audience has ever seen performed on the stage. Short as it was, it did not fail to leave an indelible impression on the minds of the spectators. The spell, however, lasted only a second. It ceased as suddenly as it had commenced, and, a moment later, the court again resounded with the shrieks of two hundred human beings. These shrieks, however, were no longer prompted by feelings of fierce and savage revenge: they originated from a sensation of undefined awe and terror. This sudden signal, what could it signify? The crowd rushed hither and thither, to ascertain the cause. Like a breaker this motley mass floated against the gates of the enclosure, the avenues to the mansion and outhouses, to bounce back at the sight of the glistening bayonets which everywhere stopped its progress as unexpectedly as effectually. The fences, the castle, the stables, were thus in turn approached. and, in less than fifteen minutes, the rioters knew that they had fallen into a trap from which nothing short of death could procure deliverance. This conviction having once taken root in their minds, their fear and consternation changed into despair. Despair, however, shares with true courage the indiffer-

ence to danger. It plunges recklessly into the fray, because it has lost the hope of avoiding the impending peril. The same crowd which, a minute ago, had anxiously sought for an outlet, now turned with gnashing teeth, and hurled defiance into the face of a foe against whom resistance was known to be impossible. The men seized their rifles and opened a desultory fire upon the assailants, while the women and children also displayed a truly startling recklessness. They seized fire-brands and hurled them over the fence, and into the doors and other apertures of the mansion and stables, venturing so near that the jægers could have shot every one of them if that had been their desire. But it is repugnant to brave men to fire upon women and children, and they bore the annoyance without retaliation, until the law of self-preservation finally compelled them to set aside all tender regards. The fire-brands, thus hurled into their midst, did not only enable the franc-tireurs to aim with greater accuracy, but the straw and hay in the stables was in constant danger of catching fire, thus jeopardizing the success of the entire enterprise. Thus far Haller had confined his attempts of gaining a bloodless victory by securing an unconditional surrender. The franc-tireurs, however, fired upon the white flag and showed such bitter and unprovoked hostility, that Haller could not help gaining the conviction that a surrender was out of the question. Was this conduct of the rioters dictated by their previous actions? Had they committed deeds which made leniency on the part of their captors impossible? We shall see.

Reluctantly Haller gave the command to fire. The jægers were exhorted to spare the women and children to the best of their ability; but who can guide bullets always in accordance with his wishes? They began to take effect in the multitude without much regard for sex or age, and the sight, fearful enough in the beginning, now became so horrible that the mind sickens at the very thought of it. The fire in the center of the court continued to blaze, and so distinctly did the dark figures stand out against the brilliant back ground, that to miss was almost impossible. Soon many mangled forms lay scattered in every direction, and heart-rending cries of anguish rose so profusely into the night-air, that nothing but the rigid laws of discipline and a growing

excitement in consequence of their own losses enabled the jægers to continue the assault.

The combat lasted nearly half-an-hour. At the expiration of that time the court was empty. The two hundred beings which had but so lately occupied and enlivened it, were either dead or prisoners. The majority had perished in the struggle. Comparatively few only had been saved. These, too, maddened by the bloody struggle, rushed into the German lines, with the intention of inflicting a death-stroke while receiving one. They had, however, overtaxed their strength and been disarmed. When the fight at last was over, and Haller proceeded to the place where the prisoners were guarded, he counted in the neighborhood of fifty. Three dead to one prisoner! Haller shuddered at the thought, while at the same time a feeling of sorrow pervaded his breast. True his own losses were light in comparison with those of the bush-whackers; but nevertheless the jægers had comrades to mourn, comrades whose death they felt more keenly, because they had fallen in a night-attack, unaccompanied with the pageant and halo of military glory which often takes the sting out of the death-wound of the soldier.

As some of the jægers snatched up a fire-brand, and let its light fall upon the prisoners, the difference in sex as well as age again forced itself into notice. The women and children, however, were more largely represented, showing after all that the men had obeyed Haller's humane instructions even in the heat of battle. They were a fearful set to look upon, men, women, children. While in some defeat had produced a gloomy resignation, others continued to gaze upon their conquerors with glances in which fury and hatred rivalled for the mastery. Nor did their feelings confine themselves to looks alone; they broke out into numerous invectives which exhausted in lowness and bitterness the vocabulary of language.

Haller examined them a few minutes in silence. He thought he noticed how a number of the captives crowded around the figure of a man who surpassed the others as much in height as in composure. He looked upon the jægers with comparative calmness, and Haller, thinking him a man of importance among his fellows, stepped up to him.

"I come to question you on a few points" he said. "Recollect, that your fate and that of your companions depend upon your answers."

The scolds amongst the crowd ceased their abuse at the first sound of Haller's voice. So, wheh he had finished speaking, an impressive stillness pervaded the assembly. The person addressed abstained from replying, and so stern and rigid were his features that no one could discern whether his silence originated from contempt or reserve.

"Tell me first who you are," commanded Haller.

Again the other disdained to reply.

"Stubborn, are you? Oh well, my friend, we shall not coax you. We'll elicit the truth without your aid, I warrant you. Monsieur Delmont, do you happen to know this person?"

"Yes, Sir," replied the young man who had witnessed the entire fight at Haller's side. "This man is one of our former tenants. His name is Malon, and he always bore a bad character. He led the rioters this evening when they attacked the castle."

"In that case he ought to be able to inform us of your uncle's whereabouts. That is after all the main point. If he can assure us of his safety, I may treat him and his associates with greater leniency than they deserve. Come, man, let us know the place where you hid this gentleman, the uncle of Mr. Delmont, I mean."

The expression of the culprit's face became so dogged, that Haller despaired of receiving from him the desired information. He was on the point of questioning the other prisoners, when an exclamation emanating from Delmont turned his attention in that direction. The young man was considerably excited. His eyes beamed and he looked with eager expectation into the face of an aged man, whose hand he shook with much warmth and affection.

"David! Old David! Where do you come from? I thought you far away by this time."

"I would have gone if I had had a chance, to tell the honest truth. I like Mr. Dupre well enough, you know it: but I like myself a little better, and when these roughs came this afternoon I thought it high time to get my walking-papers out. But the

rioters thought differently, and guarded all the avenues so closely that I had no other choice but a retreat up stairs. They chased me from story to story, until I finally succeeded in hiding in a garret-room whose only window opens on the court-yard. It had grown dark meanwhile, so that I could not see much; but by-and-by they dragged straw and hay into the yard to fire it and then I saw a spectacle—merciful heavens! I feel sick and faint when I think of it."

"So you saw something dreadful?" urged Delmont. "Come, David, tell us what you saw."

"Well, I suppose it has to be. I must betray this dreadful secret, if it were only to bring these monsters to an account. As I told you before, they lit a fire and began to dance around it in the queerest fashion. A set of demons couldn't have done it in a more approved style. All at once some more of them made their appearance, dragging Mr. Dupre to the fire. Then the whole mob began to shout worse than ever, acting like so many madmen, and making grimaces as if they meant to push him into the flames. Poor Mr. Dupre screamed dreadfully, and called for help. They surely cannot mean it, thought I, but I tell you they *did* mean it. Before the poor fellow knew it, they tied him hand and foot, and flung him into the very midst of the fire!"

A cry of horror burst from the lips of all who heard the recital of this fearful story.

"It cannot be! You must have dreamt, old man," suggested Haller.

"Indeed, I wish I *had* dreamt," protested the servant. "But I can assure you that I was as wide awake then as I am now. I can swear to the deed and the persons who committed it."

"And are they present?"

"They are, Sir, and so is their leader. There is the man who roused their brutal passion, and bid them throw an innocent old man into the flames!"

He pointed to the man whom Haller had vainly interrogated.

The jægers saw the gesture, and, although they did not understand the words, the atrocious deed and its perpetrator soon became known through the ranks. Then their indignation burst

forth in full force, and nothing but their excellent discipline saved Monsieur Malon from a retribution as swift as dreadful.

"Take the prisoners into the castle and guard them well," said Haller, to quiet the excitement of his men. "To-morrow morning we shall form a court-martial, and sit in judgment over these fiends in human form. Now we have other duties of even greater importance to perform. Miller's fate is still a riddle which we must endeavor to solve before we do anything else."

His orders were fulfilled, and in the spacious rooms of the castle the troops took a short rest. It was late; but so much had the recent events excited officers and privates that nobody thought of sleep. The former held a council in Haller's room. Delmont and David were present. The former was no longer suspected and the latter so well qualified, in consequence of his experience and familiarity with the neighborhood, to give information, that his presence had been especially demanded. He now followed with great attention the deliberations which, for his benefit, were conducted in the French language. When Haller finally asked him whether he could give further revelations concerning the whereabouts of the franc-tireurs, he gazed around with an anxious mien, and timidly inquired:

"Are Messieurs les Allemands to remain here any length of time? It is dangerous to make these disclosures."

"Any more so than your disclosure of this murder?"

"Well, I don't know. Many of our franc-tireurs would loathe such infamies. To betray their hiding-places would be a very risky thing."

"Have no fear, Sir. We shall be very careful not to reveal the source of our information."

"Well, in that case, I am willing to tell you what I know. I do not like to go myself, but I can give my young master here the necessary directions. Monsieur Victor, do you recollect the old quarry, half a mile up stream?"

"I do, David. I used to make it the scene of my boyish sports. What about it?"

"Well, Monsieur Victor, that very quarry contains a secret into which but few persons are initiated. Did you ever know that it hides the entrance to a large subterranean cave?"

"Nothing definite, David; although I recollect there was a story in vogue to that effect. We boys used to hunt for it in fun: but when I grew older without finding the slightest clue, I put it down as one of the many legends of the neighborhood."

"It is in existence, nevertheless. This man, Malon, I, and about half-a-dozen more, were the only persons initiated in the secret. We guarded it for various purposes, which were not always honorable, to confess the truth. Many a sheep or heifer which disappeared from the farm, found its way into the cave, sometimes to be sold and converted into needful cash; sometimes to furnish a roast for one of the wild and tempting revels which we were wont to hold from time to time in the bowels of the earth."

"And in this cave you suspect the franc-tireurs to hold their meetings?"

"I do, Sir. I do not know for sure; but, as you call it, I suspect it. Malon is one of the principal leaders of the organization, and, if he has anything to hide, you may depend upon it that the cave of the quarry is the place."

"But how will we find the spot, David?"

"It is easily found. In fact the very simplicity of the secret is its principal protection. You recollect the oak-tree on the left of the entrance?"

"I do, David."

"Very well. This oak is hollow. Its foot is densely covered with hazel-bushes, which we always took care to replant when necessary. If you approach the tree from the south, and bend the bushes aside, you discover a hole into which you enter. The tree stands on a lime stone rock, through which an aperture of moderate size leads into the cave. It is of easy access; but a party posted in the cave has such advantages over any assailants from without, that I would advise you to use stratagem rather than force."

"And yonr advise is reasonable, old man," said Haller. "We shall not fail to act on it. Monsieur Delmont, do you feel strong enough to serve once more as guide?"

"Certainly, Major. This dreadful end of my poor uncle has filled me with a burning thirst for vengeance which must be quenched before I can enjoy tranquility again."

With these words he rose and led the way from the castle. One hundred men were left as a guard over the prisoners, and the remaining seven hundred soon marched down the narrow ravine, which they had ascended a couple of hours ago. When they approached the river, they turned to the right and continued their march, until Delmont declared that they had reached the vicinity of the quarry in question. The ground was not very rough just there, and, although the banks of the quarry itself rose tolerably steep and high, the entrance to the cave was easy of access. When the necessary survey was completed, the troops were placed under cover in such a way as to surround and entirely command the outlet. This accomplished they patiently awaited the further development of events.

CHAPTER XXV.

Robert had fallen into a doze, when the railroad-car in which he had quartered himself for his journey to Kaiserslautern, suddenly gave a powerful bounce, and made a plunge into some abyss below which appeared bottomless to the bewildered senses of our friend. All at once, however, this descent terminated in a plunge and splash, which proved that the train had either broken through a bridge, or fallen from an embankment into a river. It certainly was water of some kind, for an icy flood at once penetrated through the apertures of the car, and awakened Robert to the necessity of making a quick attempt to extricate himself from his dangerous position. Fortunately he had made the risky descent without detriment to his broken arm or injury to his other limbs. The lamp had been extinguished and impenetrable darkness reigned in the car. Nevertheless Robert succeeded in gaining his feet; but the position of the floor was so oblique that he had to hold on to the seats in order to keep from slipping. Using his feet and his sound arm as best he could, he finally reached the platform at the upper end of the car. There he paused to look around. The night was star-lit, and therefore sufficiently bright to recognize the dim outlines of the surrounding

objects. Robert discovered that the wrecked train lay indeed across the bed of a river. The fragments of the bridge loomed up above his head, and the banks were dimly visible. The car in which he had travelled lay with the rear end—the end on which he stood—on another car, and the latter again touched the shore. The rear end was immersed; but, as the car on which he stood partly over-lapped it, he saw that he would find no difficulty in reaching the shore. Yet he hesitated, for confused sounds of rather a suspicious nature penetrated from the bank into his ears. Some of them evidently emanated from German lips; but French words, mixed with copious curses, predominated, and convinced Robert that the disaster had been planned, and that his first step on shore would also be the first step into captivity. He knew, more-over, that there were no regular French troops in the German rear, and that these men must belong to the ill-famed franc-tireurs. He had heard numerous authentic stories of wanton cruelties exercised by them against helpless prisoners, and felt pretty sure that they would make no exception in his favor. But then, what could he do? To remain on the wreck would hardly improve his chances. If the guerillas did not find him during the night, they would surely discover him in the morning. Then his surrender would be demanded and easily enforced. An attempt, therefore, of reaching the shore could not make matters worse, but it might possibly improve them. Perhaps he might avoid capture in the darkness. His uniform would not be recognized, and his perfect French might assist him in slipping through the lines of the franc-tireurs.

In accordance with these considerations, he set to work without delay. The task in itself was easy enough. A step of ordinary length landed him safely on the dry portion of the last car, and, once there, he found no difficulty in reaching the shore. The bank itself was rather steep, but, with the assistance of a few bushes, Robert soon gained the top. There he made a hasty survey of the neighborhood. The ground was tolerably level, but free from any shrubbery by means of which he might have made his escape. To make matters worse, a fire began at that moment to send forth its blaze, and light up the ground to a considerable distance. By means of it Robert saw that the French

numbered several hundred men, and that they had already captured the greater portion of the surviving passengers. But the same light which enabled him to make these observations, favored his enemies. A shout betrayed to him that he had been discovered, and, a moment afterwards, he was surrounded. His sword was rudely snatched from his side, and his pockets were searched with more dispatch than consideration. His wounded arm suffered severely during this operation, and Robert therefore attempted to appeal to their sympathy by stating his condition, and his readiness to deliver his arms as well as his valuables. This induced them to desist a moment in order to receive his watch and purse, as well as a revolver which he carried in his breast-pocket; but when they had disarmed and plundered him, they pushed him towards the other prisoners with a rudeness that showed plainly how little their momentary moderation had sprung from motives of compassion. The other prisoners stood in the immediate neighborhood of the fire whose brightness enabled Robert to recognize their faces, as well as those of the guerillas. The latter seemed to be engaged in an animated discussion. Half-a-dozen of their leaders bent their heads together, and evidently argued the pros and contras of some proposed measure. Robert looked at them with the curiosity of a man who is anxious to study the features of those on whose mood his destiny depends. Suddenly, however, his gaze becomes more intense. Has he seen right? Is that really the face of the man who has sought his death with the perseverance and unerring scent of the blood-hound? He shades his face, partly to see more sharply, partly to conceal his own features. This second gaze decides the question. One of the leaders, apparently *the* leading spirit is Alcibiades Dupre. At present he is too busily engaged to notice the captive; but when the doubtful point has been decided: what then? The moment of recognition will surely be the moment of Robert's execution. He trembles at this thought. His wound, the recent accident, his capture, his defenselessness—all these things have contributed to unnerve him in a measure. At that moment he fears his relentless foe; he shrinks from him and thinks of means to escape detection. Drawing his cap deeply over his face, he steps back and mingles with the other prisoners,

hoping that in the crowd his individuality will escape detection. But while he strives to avoid the gaze of his foe, his own eye is invariably fixed on the other's face. Now the deliberation is over and the crisis on hand. But Dupre does not approach the prisoners. He heads the franc-tireurs, and marches the greater portion off into the gloom of night. Robert draws a breath of relief. For the present the dreaded denouement has been avoided. True, the storm-cloud may again gather and break over his devoted head; but the momentary respite suffices to drive off his dejection. His pulse beats more quietly; his nerves regain their tone, and when the franc-tireurs summoned their prisoners, with word and blow, to march to an unknown prison and a doubtful destiny, Robert not only obeyed with alacrity, but, by his cheerful voice and example, exhorted his comrades to fortitude and endurance.

The road leads past the demolished bridge and then follows the river which borders it on the left, while, on the right, steep wooded hills rise to the height of several hundred feet. After marching two miles or more, the guerillas stop and send a few skirmishers into the bushes. Ten minutes later they return and report favorably, for the prisoners are placed in single file and then marched into the woods.

It was a rough road to travel. The trees and bushes, though leafless, caught the feeble starlight, leaving underneath a darkness almost tangible. More than once Robert stumbled; more than once he ran against the trunks of trees, hurting his arm so badly that he had to bite his teeth to suppress a cry of pain. Fortunately the way was short. Five minutes after entering the woods the franc-tireurs stopped and bid the foremost prisoner enter a hollow tree, from which a feeble light stole into the night. The man hesitated; but a vigorous thrust with the butt of a rifle soon terminated his indecision. He entered and disappeared, followed by his comrades who all vanished in the bowels of the earth. Robert was one of the first. He saw at once that a subterranean space, either an artificial vault or a natural lime-stone cavern, so common in the region, was to become their prison, and a keen curiosity for a while drove all other thoughts and feelings from his mind.

The entrance fell obliquely at the angle of about forty-five degrees. The ceiling was so low that Robert had to stoop in order to avoid a contact with the overhanging rocks. Some twenty rough steps mediated the descent to the bottom of the cave which bore the character peculiar to the cavities of lime-stone formations. It widened and narrowed, rose and fell, and showed a great variety of the stalactytes which, more or less, abound in all such caverns.

The prisoners were conducted through several chambers, until at last they reached one of unusually large proportions. Here their captors deserted them without any explanation whatever. They took with them the lanterns by means of which they had effected their entrance and the prisoners therefore found themselves in the most complete darkness. On the surface of the earth even the darkest night retains a trace of light by means of which the eye exercises its function. *Here* it was absolutely impossible to see one's hand before one's face. Darkness is always depressing—in captivity it is doubly so. Now, if we take into consideration that this captivity was not an ordinary one; that many of the poor fellows suffered with wounds from the battle-field or from the recent disaster, we can imagine that their mind was more than ordinarily oppressed, Robert heard them sigh; he noticed that they abstained from those dry jokes with which the German soldier likes to lighten the burden of his campaigns, and, forgetting his own pain, he set to work to cheer their spirits. Knowing that actions always go farther than words, he drew from his vest-pocket a match, and, by means of it, lit a newspaper which he folded compactly to prolong its burning.

"So, boys," he said to the others, "here we have at least a little light upon our situation. Look around, some of you, and see whether you cannot find some wood to start a fire. There's a board: aha! I knew we could improve upon our condition, if we only set our wits to working. Cut it up into splinters, some of you: who has a knife?"

Robert's face lengthened, when he discovered that everything in the shape of a knife had been removed from the men at the time of capture.

The Bombardment of Bitsch.

"Break it up with your feet," he continued; "but quick, for this paper won't last much longer."

The men acted on the hint, and really succeeded in breaking the pine board into fragments. These fragments, however, were damp in consequence of the humid atmosphere of the cave, and obstinately refused to ignite. The paper was rapidly approaching its end, and they would have been obliged to renounce their experiments, if some of the men had not incidentally discovered pieces of paper in their pockets. These in turn were ignited; but the wood remained obstinate, showing at best a dull, sickly flame which insisted upon expiring, in spite of the most enduring attempts to blow it into life and vigor.

"It won't do," said Robert, finally, "so don't let us waste this precious material uselessly. If we cannot start a fire by means of it, it may light us at least in our attempt of getting as good a berth for the night, as the damp ground of this cave can furnish. Look out for yourselves, lads: I am going to make the round. To-morrow I shall petition our jailors to grant us at least the use of a lantern."

These words were spoken with a gayety which Robert was far from feeling. Still, they had a salutory effect. Tired by the exertions of the day, the prisoners all busied themselves in hunting a place which offered a prospect, however slim, of catching a few hours of the much needed slumber. The scarcity of the paper, as well as the total absence of any bedding material, quickened their choice, and five minutes had hardly elapsed since the utterance of Robert's summons, when all the men had crept into some nook or corner, closely wrapped in the mantles which the franc-tireurs had been humane enough to leave them.

"All ready?" inquired Robert. "If so, I shall blow out the light. We must be saving with the precious material, for we don't know for what purpose we may yet need it. Good-night, comrades, and don't you get up before day-light."

This little joke called forth a laugh; but, no sooner had it receded, when the heavy breathing of the men indicated the rapid approach of slumber. Now and then a detached word still broke the stillness of the cavern; but these signs of life too became scarce and scarcer, until at last everything was silent.

All slept save Robert. He also would gladly have sought oblivion; but the pain originating from his wound on the one hand, and from the turbulent thoughts of his excited brain on the other, kept him awake against his will. He thought of his youth, his home, his parents. The panorama of his life passed before his mental eye. He gazed upon the sports of his boyhood; the aspirations and extravagances of his youth; the labors and hardships of his riper years. Through all these visions, however, shone a beautiful, a radiant face, and so vividly did the image of

Pauline Delmont rise before his eyes, that he imagined he saw in reality the beloved form, and involuntarily raised his arm to draw her into his embrace. This motion at once broke the spell. His arm fell wearily to his side, and a deep sigh escaped his bosom. It was answered from the depth of the cave. Robert started, Was it the echo that had responded to the sound? If so, the phenomenon would surely re-occur after a repetition of the sound. Robert sighed again; but no response rewarded his trouble. He cried: "Qui vive?"; but, in spite of his keen attention, nothing but the snore of a few sleepers struck his ear. Then he persuaded himself that he had been the victim of an illusion, and tried harder than ever to fall asleep; but, all at once, the sigh from the depth of the cave struck his ear with increased force. At the same time he heard a shuffling noise, as if loose slippers were dragged across a sandy floor.

What in the world could it be? His companions were all asleep. The franc-tireurs had surely left the cave. There might be another secret entrance; but even then the franc-tireurs would hardly have had recourse to such underhand measures.

If Robert had been superstitious, he might have attributed the singular phenomenon to the influence of spirits. This, however, was not the case. He felt at once convinced that some corporeal agency lay at the bottom of the affair. With this conviction he coupled the firm resolution of fathoming the mystery. He rose, lit the remnant of the paper, and advanced slowly and cautiously towards the spot from which the shuffling footsteps approached.

In spite of his courage Robert felt slightly nervous. This is natural. Even though a riper age teaches us to disbelieve the legends of our childhood, we never totally free ourselves from their influence. His fancy conjured up figures which his reason refused to acknowledge, but which nevertheless insisted upon peopling the cave.

The vault narrowed in the direction in which Robert advanced, and ended in a tunnel of such dwarfish dimensions that only one man at a time was capable of effecting a passage. But, though narrow, this tunnel seemed possessed of acoustic properties truly astonishing. The mysterious walker had not yet reached the end of the passage, and still the moans, the peculiar shuffling steps, struck Robert's ear with strange distinctness. More than once he felt tempted to repeat his "Qui vive?"; but the fear of appearing ridiculous in his own estimation prevented him from yielding to the inclination.

The noise sounded nearer and nearer, and yet the originator did not present itself. Robert grew impatient, and was on the point of entering the passage, when, all at once, the faint light of the burning paper revealed the dim outlines of a human figure.

It was a man clad in a suit of black, with which a face of deadly pallor formed a striking contrast. The head was bare, and the hair hung in dishevelled masses around the temples and over the forehead. The man walked with the uncertain step of the drunkard, and felt with both hands for the side-walls of the passage, perhaps to guide his steps, perhaps to support his feeble strength.

When the light first struck his eyes, he rapidly shaded them with his hands, a certain proof that he had been some length of time in the cave, else the feeble rays would not have offended his vision. Thus guarded, his eyes betrayed to him the presence of a fellow-being. He hailed this discovery with a joyous "ah!" and made an attempt to quicken his steps; but so reduced was his strength that he needed the assistance of his hands. Withdrawing them from his eyes, he again revealed his pale, emaciated face. Robert had meanwhile got so near that he obtained a close and distinct view of the other's features. Prompted by both curiosity and compassion, he gazed more sharply, and———

What is this? What sudden change has overcome the young man? He stands like one petrified. Then a violent tremor shakes his body. The paper falls from his trembling hand, and from his lips escape two words:

"Barmherziger Himmel!"

That is all. The light at his feet has died out, and impenetrable darkness envelops the two figures. Robert is unable to move; but the other has heard the words, and they seem to have kindled new hope in his bosom, for he exclaims in the same language:

"Oh! that is German! You are a German, are you not? You have come to save a poor, lost man whom these monsters had left to the awful death of starvation. Where are you? Oh! as you hope for final mercy from your God, do not desert me! Come to me! Let me touch, let me grasp you! Let me lean upon the arm of a fellow-being, a countryman, after this long and dreadful isolation!"

These words brought life into the paralyzed form of our friend. Once in motion, he advanced with a recklessness that threatened to bring his body every moment into contact with the projecting rocks. When he first touched the form of the other, his hand shook, as if he had touched a powerful galvanic battery; but, conquering his emotion, he laid his sound arm around the waist of the sufferer, and said with a low and trembling voice:

"Lean on me, Sir. Let me conduct you forward to the larger vault. Put your hand against the ledge, for one of my arms is disabled."

The other obeyed his injunctions, and, a moment later, they stood within the larger room. Gladly Robert would have lit another paper; but the supply had become exhausted. He therefore had to grope his way to his former quarters, leading the

new-comer as before. After several failures he at last succeeded in reaching the nook which he had occupied.

"So, my dear Sir," he said with tender solicitude. "Sit down upon this ledge, and rest yourself. Fortunately the free-booters have left my provisions untouched. I have both food and drink for you. Here; take a good sip from this flask."

The other obeyed mechanically, and with the fiery brandy new life began to stream through his veins.

"Oh, how that strengthens and quickens!" he said. "I feel like one newly born."

"I am glad to hear it. But now you must eat as well, though sparingly at first. How long have you been imprisoned here?"

"How could I tell? Does not uninterrupted darkness reign supreme here?"

"But you know the date of your imprisonment?"

"Oh yes; it was the first of December."

"And this is the night of the third. Your captors surely have not compelled you to fast so long?"

"They handed me a slice of bread the first day—that is all."

"And no water?"

"I have been compelled to quench my thirst with the moisture of the walls."

Robert uttered a sound, half groan, half imprecation.

"The monsters!" he exclaimed with compressed teeth. "Here, eat this sandwich, but slowly at first. Your stomach has been weakened by this protracted fast, and must not be overburdened now. Else your life might pay the penalty."

The other received the food, and followed Robert's injunctions with the docility of a child. When he had eaten his allowance, Robert inquired:

"May I ask, how you fell into the hands of the bushwhackers? You do not seem to belong to the army?"

"I do not, Sir. I am a lawyer by profession. My sovereign had entrusted me with the administration of the Palatinate, and I was executing the functions of my office, when, all at once, I received a dispatch from the Bavarian plenipotentiary at Versailles, summoning me tocome there and assist in certain negotiations, now pending. Of course, I obeyed with alacrity, and traveled by rail as far as Tierry. At that place I was informed that there was a break in the road which would stop the regular trains for a whole day. This was unwelcome news, for I had been enjoined to use the utmost speed, and so, when I was offered a chaise which would take me to the next station beyond the break, I gladly seized the opportunity. The driver was a villainous looking individual, and I started with serious misgivings as to the safety of the step I had taken. My forebodings were more than realized. Perhaps the coachman led me into a trap; perhaps

the franc-tireurs surprised both him and me: however this may be, I fell into the hands of a set of men who have forsworn mercy and compassion, provided they ever knew these feelings. They took me to this cavern, and left me in this department. A slice of bread was all the food I received. Perhaps they intended to renew the ration next morning; indeed, it is possible they might have cared for me, if I had remained in this vault. This I did not. I could not. Darkness and solitude oppressed me so powerfully, that an inward restlessness compelled me to rise, and make an attempt to leave this hole. Perhaps this was a foolish step, but I could not for the world have been restrained from making it. Unfortunately I took the wrong direction. Instead of approaching the entrance, I wandered deeper and deeper into the labyrinth of chambers and passages, of which the cave consists. What I suffered since, no earthly language is able to express. Excuse me, if I abstain from dwelling on the subject, for the very thought suffices to sicken me, and set my brain into a whirl."

Robert did not reply, but a compassionate pressure of the hand informed his companion that his words were fully appreciated.

"But now," continued the speaker, "tell me how you came to meet me here. Are you also a prisoner in the hands of the guerrillas?"

"I am, Sir, and with me some twenty others."

"And where are these others?"

"Right in the chamber here. The hardships of the day have sunk them into a deep slumber."

"And you alone remained awake? How fortunate for me!"

"And for me. I loathed the pain and agitating thoughts which kept me awake—now I bless them."

"You are very kind to take such deep interest in a stranger."

"A *stranger*? Ah yes, a stranger. But you give me too much credit for my actions. They are not merely dictated by compassion. Are you strong and wakeful enough to listen to a short story?"

If the other could have seen Robert's face, he would have wondered at the powerful excitement which worked almost convulsively in his features. This excitement betrayed itself even in his voice, and the stranger could hardly have failed to notice it, if his recent hardships had not, in a measure, dulled his power of perception. As it was, he merely replied:

"Indeed I am, Sir. Your brandy has greatly enlivened my spirits."

Robert reflected a moment, then he began:

"You asked me who I am. Has not my accent betrayed to you my Bavarian birth?"

"Why, yes, now since I think of it, I notice this accent. I am glad of this discovery, for I too am a Bavarian."

"I knew it, Sir; but listen further. I am at present a lieutenant with the Bavarian jægers. When this war broke out, I was in America—"

"America?" interposed the other.

"Yes, the United States. Would you remark something?"

"No, no, Sir. The name awoke—but this is folly. Continue, Sir, continue."

"The news affected me powerfully, and, yielding to an irresistible impulse, I embarked for Fatherland. I reached it in time to participate in the battle of Weissenburg. Since then I have had a hand in nearly all the bloody conflicts of the war. I fought at Gravelotte; I was at Sedan; under the walls of Paris a chassepot-bullet ended my military career for a spell: it broke my arm for me, you see."

"Poor boy! But, never mind, your arm will heal again, and a grateful country will reward your services."

"I *have* been rewarded, Sir. I began my career a private—now the straps adorn my shoulders."

"Not more than right, Sir. A man who thus hastens from another hemisphere to help his country, must be very brave. You ought to have the Iron Cross, Sir."

"My chief was kind enough to bestow upon me that badge of honor."

"I'm glad to hear it, my dear Sir. My heart beats louder in my breast, whenever I meet one of the brave warriors of my nation."

"Then you sympathize with Germany in her hour of trial?"

"With all my heart, my boy. Who could remain indifferent in times like these? It was not always so with me. There was a time—but what is that to you? Continue your story."

"There isn't much left to be told, Sir. Indeed, what's left belongs rather to the past than to the present. Nor is it as creditable as my record of the war. When I told you my achievements on the battle-field, I wanted you to remember them as an off-set for past follies."

"But why rake up these follies? It seems to pain you to mention them. Let them stay buried in the grave of time!"

"Oh, thank you for these words! If *you* will remember my virtues, and forget my foibles—"

"I will, I will; but let them rest now."

"No, Sir, that cannot—that must not be. Confession becomes the penitent: so listen. I was born and raised in Munich."

"That's where I used to live."

"My father was a judge in the service of the crown."

"That's my position."

"He was the kindest of parents, until I grew old enough to have opinions of my own. I embraced the political views of Young

Germany, while my father belonged to the ultra-montane party. He frowned upon my creed, and forbade all intercourse with the men who, as he thought, misled me. If he was stern, I was stubborn. Regardless of his wishes, his dictates, I pursued a course which first produced an estrangement, and finally led to an open rupture between us. The war of '66 hastened the crisis. My father lost a hopeful son, my elder brother—"

"A son! your brother!" echoed the other, with the voice of one who speaks in a dream.

"This embittered his mind, and induced him to interdict with more than usual rigor all intercourse with my political connections. I forgot that I was his son. I laughed at his orders; I scorned his threats, and in an evil hour I left the paternal roof never to return. Say, are you still ready to overlook my past offences?"

The other still sat like one dreaming.

"How is this?" he said at last with a toneless voice. "Am I awake or dreaming? Do I really sit here, and hear you tell an old, sad, familiar story? Or have the hardships of this imprisonment upset my reason, and mirrored before my crazed brain delusive fancies? Come, let me touch you. Are you real? Is all this real? Tell me again: you say—"

"Oh, this is unbearable," Robert exclaimed with accents of agony. "Father, come to me! Do not allow the powers of darkness to cloud up your reason! It is your son, your penitent, unfortunate Robert, who speaks to you, and, from his inmost heart, begs your forgiveness. Speak, father! Tell me that the father endorses the soothing sentiments which the stranger pronounced a while ago with so much kindness. Father, *can* you, *will* you forgive me?"

The other sat silent for a whole minute which to poor Robert seemed an eternity. Then at once a solemn voice penetrated the darkness.

"God Almighty, I thank Thee for this moment! Thy ways are dark and Thy judgments marvelous; but Thou carriest out Thy plans in glory! Thou tookst from me my liberty and I murmured; and lo! through the night of my prison, Thou sendest me unspeakable bliss! My son was taken from me! My son has been restored to me, to shed sunshine npon the days of old age! Robert, my Robert! My dear, my only son!"

He felt for the young man in the darkness, and, a second later, the two lay in each other's arms.

It was a happy as well as solemn moment. Father and son united after a long and painful separation! They knelt interlocked in each other's embrace, as if they meant never to part again. Tears mingled freely on their cheeks, and again and again the loving words "my father" "my son" vibrated through the darkness.

"And you will really forget and pardon?" Robert inquired, after the first intoxication of delight had spent itself.

"Mention it no more, Robert," his father replied gravely. "I need forgiveness as well as you. If you forgot your duty as a son, I overstepped the prerogatives of the father. Let us bury the past, and rejoice in the blissful present. We have so much to say to one another! You surely want to hear about your mother and sister, and I, for my part, burn with impatience to learn the history of your exile. Come, let us wile away the tedious hours by exchanging our news."

"Not now, father; not now. I fear you over-estimate your strength. You are feverishly excited, and therefore unconscious of fatigue. But that cannot last. Your late hardships will soon tell with double force, and, if you don't husband your strength, it may fail you in the crisis which is sure to come. Here, take another sip from my flask, and then endeavor to catch some slumber. Eager as I am to learn about the dear ones at home, I can afford to wait until a good night's rest has recruited your strength."

The other pressed his hand.

"Perhaps you are right," he said. "Indeed I feel even now a leaden weight pressing on my eyelids. Let me have the dram, and then good-night. *Good-night*, my boy, and may a kind Providence guard and bless your slumber!"

Robert responded to the wish, and then assisted in making his father as comfortable as he could. This accomplished, he lay down by his side, listening to his breathing, and combatting the drowsiness that began to settle on his own eyes. No sooner had he convinced himself that his dear companion had fallen asleep, than he ceased to struggle against nature. His eyes closed, and, a minute later, a sound, healthful slumber made him forgetful of both the joys and sorrows of that eventful day.

Haller and his men lay in ambush all the night without discovering a trace of the enemy. Nobody entered or left the cave during the hours of darkness, and the major began to doubt the correctness of David's information, when, at the hour of dawn, a low whistle from one of the sentinels attracted his attention. A moment afterwards he was informed that a body of about one hundred men approached the quarry in an eastern direction. They were so near already that Haller had hardly time to prepare for their reception. He withdrew his men to the brow of the hill, ordering both wings to fall down to the river bank, and close in upon the guerrillas as soon as they had reached the spot abreast the quarry.

The jægers were still engaged in climbing the hill, when the franc-tireurs made their appearance on the road below. It was barely twilight, and the bushes of the hill-side in a measure concealed the movements of the jægers. However, seven hun-

dred men cannot accomplish so rough an ascent without making more or less noise, and the franc-tireurs evidenty began to suspect that something was wrong, for they halted on the road, and sent only a few men up the hill to reconnoitre the entrance of the cave.

This measure decided their fate. Seing the impossibility of hiding the further movements of the jægers, the officers in command of the wings substituted rapidity for secrecy of motion, and hurried their men with the greatest dispatch down hill to the river-bank. Perhaps the bushwhackers might still have effected their escape; but the sudden appearance of so large a number of men who shook the bushes and the ground with their rapid strides, bewildered them, and prevented them from forming that quick resolution which alone was able to save them. When they awoke from their stupor it was too late. True, they took to their heels with a good will, but found the way both up and down the river barred by a double row of glistening steel. The jægers advanced with firm and rapid steps, driving the frightened franc-tireurs before them like so many sheep. Soon the doomed bushwhackers stood compressed in a dense mass, shouting and screaming, and making frantic efforts to break the lines of their assailants. When they found flight impossible, they turned at bay and began to fire upon the jægers, who returned the compliment with interest, and discharged their rifles with fearful effect into the dense crowd. At the same time the officers summoned the guerrillas at the top of their voices to surrender; but the din of the fight either drowned their voices, or the free-booters disdained to benefit by the proffered chance. They certainly did not lay down their arms, but continued their frantic efforts to escape. Some ran up hill to be received by the jægers above; others sprang into the river either to be drowned, or to be killed by the bullets which the German sharpshooters sent after them with unerring certainty. Two or three escaped across the river, but the majority were either captured or killed. The whole fight only lasted half-an-hour. At the expiration of that time, seventy franc-tireurs lay dead on the ground, while some twenty stood captives in the hands of the jægers.

But we must retrace our steps, and chronicle a scene which occurred near the mouth of the cave at the beginning of the fight. When the alarm was first sounded, and the rifles commenced to crack below, a band of some fifteen bushwhackers rushed from the cave to learn the cause, and to assist their fellows. The jægers were posted some twelve feet above them, holding a ledge which rose almost perpendicularly from the ground below. Haller too had taken his position at that place.

"Throw down your arms!" he cried in French, "or we shall fire."

The fellows looked up, and, when they saw fifty barrels pointed

at their breast, shrank back in dismay. All but one obeyed the summons of the major. This one seemed to be their leader. He evidently was a fierce fellow; for when he looked up and noticed the enemy, a savage curse escaped his lips. At the same time he drew a revolver, and discharged several bullets with so much precision that they whistled in dangerous proximity to Haller's person. The jægers were on the point of discharging their rifles, when a sudden "stop! don't fire!" caused them to pause. It was Schultze's voice that thus saved the bushwhacker's life.

"I know that viper," he cried, "and want to catch him alive."

Before the jægers could divine his intention; before the bushwhacker below could take measures to thwart it, Schultze made an onset, and leaped down amongst the frightened crowd. So well had he measured the distance, that he lit right upon the ledge in front of the hostile leader. Even in rising from the stoop, into which the leap had forced him, he made a grasp at the other's throat. We know that Schultze was a man of no ordinary strength, and his design would undoubtedly have succeeded, if he had executed it with a little more deliberation. As it was, he thrust his hand with so much force against the free-booter's throat that the fellow flew back, before Schultze had secured a firm hold. He fell much like a wooden pin which a sudden blow has knocked off its base, drawing into his fall a couple of guerrillas behind him, and then tumbled down a steep ledge of nearly thirty feet which had been formed by the excavations of the quarry. A shudder ran through friend and foe. Even Schultze was startled at this unexpected issue of his attempt. With hesitating step he approached the ledge, and gazed into the depth below. A fearful sight met his eye. On the rocky bottom of the caldron lay the mangled corpse of the man whom this very attempt of taking him alive had laid into an early grave. The rocks were colored with his blood, and from his head ran a stream of the precious fluid with which life had ebbed away.

Schultze was still gazing upon the horrid sight, when, all at once, a joyful exclamation behind him caused him to start and turn with alacrity. A new actor had appeared on the scene as if by magic. Before the cave stood Robert, the long and sadly missed friend. Was this real, or had the horrid vision affected his brain? But no! The others saw their favorite as well. Haller hastens near; the jægers shout and hurrah, and the object of all this commotion smiles, and extends his sound arm and cries:

"Halloh, friend Schultze! How now?"

Then Schultze awakens from his trance. He jumps towards his friend, and closes him in an embrace which only his regard for the broken arm makes endurable.

"Hurrah!" is his first word. Then he begins to scold.

"Is that the way to get a broken arm healed?" he cries. "What

in the name of sense are you doing? Creeping about in damp caverns, eh?"

But before Miller is capable of answering, Haller has reached and monopolized him. The jægers also crowd near, and offer him a friendly welcome. He continues to be the center of attraction, until, all at once, other figures begin to emerge from the bowela of the earth, and claim a portion of the common attention. The first form is that of a middle-aged man, evidently unknown to everybody save Haller. When the major first sees him, he starts back with alarm and consternation.

"Judge Feller!" he exclaims. "How is this possible? You in the hands of French bushwhackers?"

A smile flitted across the judge's face.

"Yes, and liberated by Major Haller. That's what I call heaping fiery coal upon a stubborn head. Major will you receive both my thanks for present favors, and my apologies for past offences?"

He offered his hand which the other received as in a trance.

"I hardly comprehend this," he stammered. "You in this dilemma! You so kind, so friendly to me, after—"

"After a past which we will not revive," the judge interrupted him with another and even warmer pressure of the hand. "I am so happy to-day that I bear no ill-will to my worst enemy, much less to my liberator from such frightful durance."

"I do indeed congratulate you on the recovery of your freedom."

"And why not on the recovery of that other and greater blessing? He told me you were his warm and steadfast friend."

"Whose friend?"

"Why, Robert's, of course. Do you, perhaps, reject his friendship?"

"I would not dream of such a thing. But what did you mean by '*that other and greater blessing*?' "

"What? Don't you know—"

Just then Robert laid his hand upon the judge's arm.

"Let me make the revelation," he said with smiling lips. Then turning to Haller and Schultze he said with accents of the purest happiness:

"Gentlemen, allow me to present to you my father, Justizrath Feller, of Munich, Bavaria. So, the secret is out of the bag, and now do me the favor to delay all exclamations of wonder and surprise to a more favorable opportunity. This is not the very pleasantest abode, and, if you have no objection, we might as well depart for more agreeable quarters."

The others all seemed to share this opinion, and a general commotion initiated the departure from the spot, when Schultze suddenly seemed to recollect something and stopped his friend.

"See here," he said, laying his hand on Robert's arm, "do you know that he is dead?"

"*He*? who is he?"

"The man who more than once sought your life."

"Dupre?" Robert inquired, with a start.

Instead of answering, Schultze led him to the ledge and pointed down. Robert saw and shuddered.

"That is fearful!" he stammered. "He fell into the very trap which he so often set for me. Come, let us go; the sight is sickening."

A minute later the quarry lay deserted. The jægers formed on the road, and awaited the order to march. The officers held a short council. The question, where to go, was submitted to their deliberation. At that moment Delmont stepped up to the group.

"If you will deem it no intrusion," he said, "I shall be happy to offer you the hospitality of my castle. You will find there comfortable quarters, and, probably, if the free-booters have not plundered everything, sufficient provisions for your men."

Mr. Feller stood in the circle, when the young Frenchman advanced this offer. He looked at him sharply, and a gleam of recognition flew over his face. He stepped up to him and offered his hand.

"Why, that is my young protege and prisoner," he said. "Have you forgotten me, lieutenant?"

Delmont blushed more deeply than the occasion seemed to warrant. He took the proffered hand, and said:

"How could I forget you, Sir? Do I not owe my recovery chiefly to your kindness and the tender care I received at your house?"

"Don't mention the trifles, Sir. But it strikes me you are losing flesh again. Perhaps you ought to have remained a little longer under the treatment of my ladies."

"Oh, I am well enough; but such dreadful tragedies are enough to break down the stoutest constitution."

"What do you allude to? You have sustained no losses, I hope?"

"Indeed I have, Sir. My poor uncle was burnt to death last night by these deluded people."

"Merciful heavens! How is that possible?"

"It is certainly incomprehensible. But you do not know the worst: What will you say, when I inform you that the father was murdered at the instigation of the son?"

A look of horror became visible on every face around.

"And this monster of a son: is he living?"

Delmont shook his head.

"His mangled body lies in the bottom of the quarry."

Now it was Robert's turn to become attentive. He turned to Schultze and said in a whisper:

"I do not understand this. This young officer seems to be a relative of Dupre. What is his name?"

"Delmont!"

If a galvanic battery had discharged its current upon Robert, he could not have received a greater shock. This Delmont, the brother of Pauline! Need we wonder that he voted in favor of going to the castle?

That step was really decided upon, and, an hour later, the whole company, officers and privates, were comfortably quartered in the spacious apartments of the Delmont-Castle.

When the jægers that morning marched to Delmont Castle, nobody contemplated a longer sojourn at that place; but, in reply to a dispatch in which Haller telegraphed the result of his expedition to headquarters, he received the order to leave the jægers as a garrison in the region, under the command of the oldest captain, and only report in person at Versailles. This suited everybody, including the major, for Judge Feller, the father of Hildegard, declared his intention of traveling in his company. True, he had to part from Hildegard's brother; but this separation was sweetened by divers circumstances, which I cannot withhold from the reader. In the first place, Robert had whispered in the major's ear that the judge had repeatedly thrown out mysterious hints concerning an old love-affair which had once wrecked on his opposition, but now enjoyed his most decided approval. Secondly, he had betrayed to his friend the fact that the judge had written a letter to his wife and daughter, directing them to repair to Delmont-Castle by the next safe opportunity that might offer. With these communications as a solace, the major departed in great glee, taking with him Feller the father, while Feller the son remained at the castle, nursed by Delmont and protected by Schultze and his jægers. His acquaintance with Victor soon ripened into a firm friendship, their common love for Pauline proving a powerful tie. Schultze also bestowed his affection upon the young Frenchman, quickened perhaps by the consciousness of the wrong which he had done to both brother and sister by his unfounded suspicions.

Two weeks afterwards Mrs. Feller and Hildegard arrived at the castle. Delmont received them at the nearest railroad-station, and cautiously prepared them for the meeting with the long lost son and brother. Need I say that this recovery spread new sunlight upon their faces, and instilled a deeper happiness into their hearts? Need I add that a few words of Robert, whispered into his sister's ear, had by no means the effect of blighting this newborn bliss; but rather charmed fresh roses unto her cheeks? All this is too deeply founded in human nature to require a special mention. I may therefore as well proceed to state that Haller received frequent furloughs to visit Delmont-Castle, and that his permits were accompanied with a full-power, a *carte blanche* of Judge Feller to court his daughter. The major was too resolute

a man to neglect such splendid opportunities, and, four weeks after the arrival of the ladies, he was able to announce to Schultze with a radiant face that he had won himself a "Braut," which, in the German language, means nothing less than one affianced or betrothed.

In the meantime Robert recovered from his wound; but the sojourn in the cave and the hardships preceding and following it, had so much aggravated the evil, that his arm was hardly well, when the joyful news of the surrender of Paris, and the conclusion of the war made the walls of Delmont-Castle ring with the shouts of its inhabitants. Consequently he could only in spirit accompany his comrades on their glorious marches and expeditions. As a general thing he exulted in their achievements; but sometimes he conld not suppress a murmur of dissatisfaction at the thought that he had to lie idle while others plucked such copious laurels.

Let me enumerate in rapid succession the principal engagements. The army of the Loire exhibits a truly brilliant record. After the bloody battle of Artenay, which lasted from the 2nd to the 5th of December, it succeeded in retaking Orleans. On the 7th, it fought at Neung and La Cordon; on the 8th at Beaugency; on the 9th at Blois; on the 16th and 17th at Vendome, Epuisay and Drove. On the 21st it took Tours; on the 31st it fought at Vendome and Bonny, and from the 6th to the 12th of January '71, it gained the bloody victory of Le Mans.

The army of the north, meanwhile, was not idle. Two battles of first magnitude adorn its records. I say battles, because in this instance, *battles* means *victories.* The entire war cannot exhibit a *single French victory.* Even the second battle at Orleans was nothing but an orderly retreat of 20,000 before 200,000, in which the obstinate resistance of the brave Bavarians caused some inconsiderable loss. But to return to the record of the army of the north. The first battle alluded to took place December the 23rd, on the banks of the small river Hallue, north of Amiens; and the second at the city of Quentin, Jan. the 19th,'71. Both battles foiled and utterly frustrated the attempts of the efficient Fai d' herbes to relieve Paris.

Lastly we have to say a word about the army of the east. It had at first performed an indifernnt role in the great drama of war. To defeat the legions of Garibaldi had been an easy task, to perform which a small army had fully sufficed. But lately a change in the tactics of the French had necessitated a change on the part of the Germans. Bourbaki had been entrusted with the command of a large and efficient army, whose task was to destroy the Germans in its front, and then to penetrate into Southern Germany to give to her inhabitants a taste of hostile invasion. The plan was not bad; the situation grave. One lost battle would

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have placed the French in possession of the Vosges Mountains, and jeopardized all the German lines of communication.

The Germans had already gained the battles of Langres, on Dec. the 16th, and of Nuits, Dec. the 18th; but although bloody enough—especially the latter—they sink into insignificance, when compared with the sanguinary battle which was fought on Jan. the 15th, 16th and 17th, at and near the town of Montbeliard. The French aimed at relieving the sorely-pressed garrison of Belfort; but, to reach it, they had to break the German line. This line was long and thin; moreover, the assailants numbered seven to three; but in spite of their greatest exertions, in spite of a protracted struggle of three days, they did not succeed in breaking one single link in the German chain. The brave fellows knew the dangers of a defeat. They said to each other: The Frenchers *shall* not break through—and they *didn't*. From that battle dates the retreat of the French in that region. They were threatened in every direction, and their retreat soon degenerated into a rout. Some were captured, others killed, while the greater portion, 80,000 men, saw no other salvation but to cross the Swiss frontier, where they were disarmed and interned until the conclusion of the war.

At Paris the besieged continued their bloody but useless efforts. They made sorties on the 21st and 25th of December, and when, on the 27th, the German batteries began to belch forth their fire against the city, they gave vent to their rage in three more sallies, which date Jan. the 14th, 15th and 19th, and terminated alike in the repulse of the attacking party. Finally, on the 27th of Jan., the Paris Government saw the uselessness of further resistance, and opened negotiations for peace wh ichwere perfected on the 28th, and soon led to the cessation of hostilities all over the country. The reader is aware that the ratification of the treaty of peace has not yet been made. He is moreover aware that internal dissensions complete the ruin of the once beautiful city of Paris.

It may therefore suffice to pay another visit to Paris. The siege is over; the Germans have as yet forborne to make their triumphal entrance. The admittance to the city is really interdicted; but a favored few find no difficulty in avoiding the barriers. Victor Delmont is one of these favored few. He has known Paris in her days of splendor; but he does not go now to study her misery. He is attracted, hurried by brotherly love. Robert has accompanied him to the line of demarkation, and, as he cannot go with him any further, he gives him at least the street and number where his sister resides. *Where she resides*, provided the hardships and perils of the siege have not long ago claimed her as a victim. What a torturing thought! How the poor lad hurries to embrace her, and yet again tarries from fear of receiving the dreadful news of her death. At last the house is reached,

the bell is rung. The door opens and the first face he meets is that of Jean, his old servant and play-mate. He grasps his arm convulsively, and cries: "My sister, Jean?"

"Why, Lord," the faithful fellow cries, "is that really you, Monsieur Victor? I never expected to see you again."

"Never mind me, Sir," Victor cries, impatiently, tightening his grasp. "My sister, Jean, my sister?"

"Auch, Sir," cries Jean, "let go my arm. You pinch it blue and black."

"You blockhead, can you not speak? How is my sister?"

"Oh, she is all right. That is she isn't either; for if she don't change before long, she'll grieve herself to death, Sir. She cries from morning till night, and from night till morning. There's something the matter here."

Jean pointed significantly to his heart. Victor, however, knows what he wants to know. He flies up stairs and knocks. The door opens, and, with a cry of joy, Pauline sinks into his arms. They hug and kiss each other; but no sooner is the first excitement over, when the precarious symptom to which Jean had alluded makes its appearance. Pauline cries and cries, as if her heart would break. In vain Victor tries to console her. At last he says:

"But, Pauline dear, what does this signify? Do you know who gave me your address? Do you know who waits impatiently for me to lead you from this city?"

She nods, but his words only make the tears come faster.

"Pauline! What under heaven does this signify? Don't you love Robert?"

"Alas! I do—too well," she sobs. "If I did not,—I would—not cry—so much."

"You speak in riddles, Pauline," cries the amazed brother. "You cry because you love him?"

"Yes, and because—I pledged my hand—to Alcibiades,—if he—would only—save my Robert—from—the prison."

A ray of joy flits over Victor's face.

"Poor girl!" he cries. "If that is all that ails you: cheer up. Dupre will never wed you. He has been married to a fearful bride. The cold and dismal grave has been his bridal-chamber."

A tremor passes through the weeping maiden. Her tears cease as if by magic.

"Brother!" she cries with startling vehemence. "Alcibiades dead! You do not mock me? You do not attempt to deceive me? Oh, Victor, my reason could not stand such fearful sport."

"So help me God in my dying hour: I speak the truth."

And now this sudden, this marvelous change! She rises; she shouts; she dances; she falls upon his neck and hugs and kisses him. Then suddenly she sinks upon her knees and offers thanks for her delivery. The next moment, however, she is upon her

feet again, to dart from the room and pour into Jeannette's ear the glorious news. Victor smiles, but tear upon tear rolls down his cheeks, and his face wears such a melancholy look, that we feel tempted to believe in some affliction of his own.

But this does not last. The next minute Pauline has again engaged his whole attention. She consults him in reference to her intended departure and makes all needful preparations. At length the wished for moment arrives, and, after a short and lucky trip, Pauline flies into the arms of Robert. From that time the melancholy expression in Victor's countenance deepens. He cannot see the happiness of others. When Robert and his sister caress each other, he smiles so sadly that it looks like crying. But when he sees Herman and Hildegard together, he frowns. What can it mean? Has he been conquered twice? Has he surrendered his sword to German valor and his heart to German loveliness? Poor boy! Thy love is not requited, and we might almost wish on thy account, that the sword which wounded thee at Wœrth had gone a little deeper and found its way into thy heart. *This* wound thou mayest, perchance, carry with thee to thy dying hour. But we will not mar our satisfaction by dwelling on his grief. Let us rather join the two happy couples at the double wedding which took place four weeks ago at Delmont-Castle. Judge Feller and his wife are present, and so is Aspasia, the spinster, who does not fancy the idea of breaking her old tongue with the barbarous Teutonic idiom, but hides her dissatisfaction with the skill of the diplomate who smiles at bad terms, when he cannot secure good ones. Schultze is there, of course. He officiates as groomsman at the wedding, and we should wonder at his unusually radiant face, if we had not seen him take Robert and Haller aside that very morning, to show them a letter which had arrived the evening before. That letter announced to him the reconciliation with his family.

Victor is not present at the wedding. At first he plead official duty as an apology for his absence; but when Pauline pouted and would accept no such trifling excuse, he requested a private interview. What took place then we cannot tell. All we know is that Pauline retnrned from it with tear-stained eyes, and that she no longer complained of the insufficiency of his excuses. May the future bring him oblivion, and bestow upon the others all the happiness which they deserve.

THE END.

II

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